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HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS

FROM THE DEATH OF WILLIAM THE SILENT
TO THE TWELVE YEARS' TRUCE—1609

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II

1590—1609

WITH PORTRAITS



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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

TWO CONCLUDING VOLUMES.

It will be seen that a change has been made in the epoch at which it was originally meant to close this work. Instead of going on with the exclusive history of the Netherlands until the synod of Dort, the author has thought it more strictly in accordance with his general plan, as well as more convenient for the reader, to pause with the narrative at the point of time when the Republic was formally admitted into the family of nations by the treaty of twelve years Truce, and when its independence was virtually admitted by Spain.

The history of the Thirty Years' War, with which the renewed conflict between the Dutch Commonwealth and the Spanish Monarchy was blended, until the termination of the great European struggle by the peace of Westphalia, involves all the most important episodes in the progress of the Netherlands until the year 1648.

Upon this history, which is the natural complement to his two works—"The Rise of the Dutch Republic" and "The History of the United Netherlands,"—the author is now engaged, and he hopes at a future day to ask for it the indulgence which has been generously accorded to its predecessors.

London, *August*, 1867.

HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS

BOOK III

THE UNITED NETHERLANDS.

CHAPTER XXI.

Effect of the Assassination of Henry III. — Concentration of forces for the invasion of France — The Netherlands determine on striking a blow for freedom — Organization of a Dutch army — Stratagem to surprise the castle of Breda — Intrepidity and success of the enterprise.

THE dagger of Jacques Clément had done much, and was likely to do more, to change the face of Europe. Another proof was afforded that assassination had become a regular and recognised factor in the political problems of the sixteenth century. Another illustration was exhibited of the importance of the individual—even although that individual was in himself utterly despicable—to the working out of great historical results. It seemed that the murder of Henry III.—that forlorn caricature of kingship and of manhood—was likely to prove eminently beneficial to the cause of the Netherland commonwealth. Five years earlier, the murder of William the Silent had seemed to threaten its very existence.

For Philip the Prudent, now that France was deprived of a head, conceived that the time had arrived when he might himself assume the sovereignty of that kingdom. While a thing of straw, under the name of Charles X. and shape of a Cardinal Bourbon, was set up to do battle with that living sovereign and soldier, the heretic Béarnese, the Duke of Parma was privately ordered to bend all his energies towards the conquest of the realm in dispute, under pretence of assisting the Holy League.

Accordingly, early in the year 1590, Alexander concentrated a considerable force on the French frontier in Artois and Hainault, apparently threatening Bergen-op-Zoom and other cities in South Holland, but in reality preparing to invade France. The Duke of Mayenne, who had assumed the title of lieutenant-general of that kingdom, had already visited him at Brussels in order to arrange the plan of the campaign.[1]

While these measures were in preparation, an opportunity was likely to be afforded to the Netherlanders of striking a blow or two for liberty and independence; now that all the force that possibly could be spared was to be withdrawn by their oppressors and to be used for the subjugation of their neighbours. The question was whether there would be a statesman and a soldier ready to make use of this golden opportunity.

There was a statesman ripe and able who, since the death of the Taciturn, had been growing steadily in the estimation of his countrymen and who already was paramount in the councils of the States-General. There was a soldier, still very young, who was possessed of the strongest hereditary claims to the confidence and affection of the United Provinces and who had been passing a studious youth in making himself worthy of his father and his country. Fortunately, too, the statesman and the soldier were working most harmoniously together. John of Olden-Barneveld, with his great experience and vast and steady intellect, stood side by side with young Maurice of Nassau at this important crisis in the history of the new commonwealth.

At length the twig was becoming the tree—*tandem fit surculus arbor*—according to the device assumed by the son of William the Silent after his father's death.

The Netherlands had sore need of a practical soldier to contend with the scientific and professional tyrants against whom they had so long been struggling, and Maurice, although so young, was pre-eminently a practical man. He was no enthu-

[1] Bor, vol. III. B. xxvi. pp. 516, 518.

siast ; he was no poet. He was at that period certainly no politician. Not often at the age of twenty has a man devoted himself for years to pure mathematics for the purpose of saving his country. Yet this was Maurice's scheme. Four years long and more, when most other youths in his position and at that epoch would have been alternating between frivolous pleasures and brilliant exploits in the field, the young prince had spent laborious days and nights with the learned Simon Stevinus of Bruges. The scientific work which they composed in common, the credit of which the master assigned to the pupil, might have been more justly attributed perhaps to the professor than to the prince, but it is certain that Maurice was an apt scholar.

In that country, ever held in existence by main human force against the elements, the arts of engineering, hydrostatics and kindred branches were of necessity much cultivated. It was reserved for the young mathematician to make them as potent against a human foe.

Moreover, there were symptoms that the military discipline, learning and practical skill, which had almost made Spain the mistress of the world, were sinking into decay. Farnese, although still in the prime of life, was broken in health, and there seemed no one fit to take the place of himself and his lieutenants when they should be removed from the scene where they had played their parts so consummately. The army of the Netherlands was still to be created. Thus far the contest had been mainly carried on by domestic militia and foreign volunteers or hirelings. The train-bands of the cities were aided in their struggles against Spanish pikemen and artillerists, Italian and Albanian cavalry by the German riders, whom every little potentate was anxious to sell to either combatant according to the highest bid, and by English mercenaries, whom the love of adventure or the hope of plunder sent forth under such well-seasoned captains as Williams and Morgan, Vere and the Norrises, Baskerville and Willoughby.

But a Dutch army there was none and Maurice had

determined that at last a national force should be created. In this enterprise he was aided and guided by his cousin Lewis William, Stadtholder of Friesland—the quaint, rugged little hero, young in years but almost a veteran in the wars of freedom, who was as genial and intellectual in council as he was reckless and impulsive in the field.

Lewis William had felt that the old military art was dying out and that there was nothing to take its place. He was a diligent student of antiquity. He had revived in the swamps of Friesland the old manœuvres, the quickness of wheeling, the strengthening, without breaking ranks or columns, by which the ancient Romans had performed so much excellent work in their day, and which seemed to have passed entirely into oblivion. Old colonels and rittmasters, who had never heard of Leo the Thracian nor the Macedonian phalanx, smiled and shrugged their shoulders, as they listened to the questions of the young count, or gazed with profound astonishment at the eccentric evolutions to which he was accustoming his troops. From the heights of superior wisdom they looked down with pity upon these innovations on the good old battle order. They were accustomed to great solid squares of troops wheeling in one way, steadily, deliberately, all together, by one impulse and as one man. It was true that in narrow fields, and when the enemy was pressing, such stately evolutions often became impossible or ensured defeat ; but when the little Stadtholder drilled his soldiers in small bodies of various shapes, teaching them to turn, advance, retreat, wheel in a variety of ways, sometimes in considerable masses, sometimes man by man, sending the foremost suddenly to the rear, or bringing the hindmost ranks to the front, and began to attempt all this in narrow fields as well as in wide ones, and when the enemy was in sight, men stood aghast at his want of reverence, or laughed at him as a pedant. But there came a day when they did not laugh, neither friends nor enemies. Meantime the two cousins, who directed all the military operations in the provinces, understood each other thoroughly and proceeded to perfect

their new system, to be adopted at a later period by all civilized nations.[2]

The regular army of the Netherlands was small in number at that moment—not more than twenty thousand foot with two thousand horse—but it was well disciplined, well equipped, and, what was of great importance, regularly paid. Old campaigners complained that in the halcyon days of paper enrolments, a captain could earn more out of his company than a colonel now received for his whole regiment. The days when a thousand men were paid for, with a couple of hundred in the field, were passing away for the United Provinces and existed only for Italians and Spaniards. While, therefore, mutiny on an organised and extensive scale seemed almost the normal condition of the unpaid legions of Philip, the little army of Maurice was becoming the model for Europe to imitate.

The United Provinces were as yet very far from being masters of their own territory. Many of their most important cities still held for the king. In Brabant, such towns as Breda with its many dependencies and Gertruydenberg ; on the Waal, the strong and wealthy Nymegen which Martin Schenk had perished in attempting to surprise ; on the Yssel, the thriving city of Zutphen, whose fort had been surrendered by the traitor York, and the stately Deventer, which had been placed in Philip's possession by the treachery of Sir William Stanley ; on the borders of Drenthe, the almost impregnable Koevorden, key to the whole Zwollian country ; and in the very heart of ancient Netherland, Groningen, capital of the province of the same name, which the treason of Renneberg had sold to the Spanish tyrant ;—all these flourishing cities and indispensable strongholds were garrisoned by foreign troops, making the idea of Dutch independence a delusion.

While Alexander of Parma, sorely against his will and in obedience to what he deemed the insane suggestions of his master, was turning his back on the Netherlands in order to

[2] Reyd, viii. 162.

relieve Paris, now hard pressed by the Béarnese, an opportunity offered itself of making at least a beginning in the great enterprise of recovering these most valuable possessions.

The fair and pleasant city of Breda lies on the Merk, a slender stream, navigable for small vessels, which finds its way to the sea through the great canal of the Dintel. It had been the property of the Princes of Orange, Barons of Breda, and had passed with the other possessions of the family to the house of Châlons-Nassau. Henry of Nassau had, half a century before, adorned and strengthened it by a splendid palace-fortress which, surrounded by a deep and double moat, thoroughly commanded the town. A garrison of five companies of Italian infantry and one of cavalry lay in this castle, which was under the command of Edward Lanzavecchia, governor both of Breda and of the neighbouring Gertruydenberg.

Breda was an important strategical position. It was moreover the feudal superior of a large number of adjacent villages as well as of the cities Osterhout, Steenberg and Rosendaal. It was obviously not more desirable for Maurice of Nassau to recover his patrimonial city than it was for the States-General to drive the Spaniards from so important a position.[3]

In the month of February, 1590, Maurice, being then at the castle of Voorn in Zeeland, received a secret visit from a boatman, Adrian van der Berg by name, who lived at the village of Leur, eight or ten miles from Breda, and who had long been in the habit of supplying the castle with turf. In the absence of woods and coal mines, the habitual fuel of the country was furnished by those vast relics of the antediluvian forests which abounded in the still partially submerged soil. The skipper represented that his vessel had passed so often into and out of the castle as to be hardly liable to search by the guard on its entrance. He suggested a

[3] Bor, III. xxvi. 518, *seqq.* Giucciardini *in voce.* Meteren, xvi. 290, 291, Em. van Reyd, viii. 162–163. Bentivoglio, II. v. 336, 338.

stratagem by which it might be possible to surprise the stronghold.

The prince approved of the scheme and immediately consulted with Barneveld. That statesman at once proposed, as a suitable man to carry out the daring venture, Captain Charles de Heraugiere, a nobleman of Cambray, who had been long in the service of the States, had distinguished himself at Sluys and on other occasions, but who had been implicated in Leicester's nefarious plot to gain possession of the city of Leyden a few years before.[4] The Advocate expressed confidence that he would be grateful for so signal an opportunity of retrieving a somewhat damaged reputation. Heraugiere, who was with his company in Voorn at the moment, eagerly signified his desire to attempt the enterprise as soon as the matter was communicated to him; avowing the deepest devotion to the house of William the Silent and perfect willingness to sacrifice his life, if necessary, in its cause and that of the country. Philip Nassau, cousin of Prince Maurice and brother of Lewis William, governor of Gorcum, Dorcum, and Lowenstein Castle and colonel of a regiment of cavalry, was also taken into the secret, as well as Count Hohenlo, President Van der Myle and a few others; but a mystery was carefully spread and maintained over the undertaking.

Heraugiere selected sixty-eight men, on whose personal daring and patience he knew that he could rely, from the regiments of Philip Nassau and of Famars, governor of the neighbouring city of Heusden, and from his own company. Besides himself, the officers to command the party were captains Logier and Fervet, and lieutenant Matthew Held. The names of such devoted soldiers deserve to be commemorated and are still freshly remembered by their countrymen.

On the 25th of February, Maurice and his staff went to Willemstad on the Isle of Klundert, it having been given out on his departure from the Hague that his destination was Dort. On the same night at about eleven o'clock, by the

[4] Vol. II. of this work, ch. xvii p. 333, *seqq.*

feeble light of a waning moon, Heraugiere and his band came to the Swertsenburg ferry, as agreed upon, to meet the boatman. They found neither him nor his vessel, and they wandered about half the night, very cold, very indignant, much perplexed. At last, on their way back, they came upon the skipper at the village of Terheyde, who made the extraordinary excuse that he had overslept himself and that he feared the plot had been discovered. It being too late to make any attempt that night, a meeting was arranged for the following evening No suspicion of treachery occurred to any of the party, although it became obvious that the skipper had grown faint-hearted. He did not come on the next night to the appointed place but he sent two nephews, boatmen like himself, whom he described as dare-devils.

On Monday night, the 26th of February, the seventy went on board the vessel, which was apparently filled with blocks of turf, and packed themselves closely in the hold.[5] They moved slowly during a little time on their perilous voyage; for the winter wind, thick with fog and sleet, blew directly down the river, bringing along with it huge blocks of ice and scooping the water out of the dangerous shallows, so as to render the vessel at any moment liable to be stranded. At last the navigation became impossible and they came to a standstill. From Monday night till Thursday morning those seventy Hollanders lay packed like herrings in the hold of their little vessel, suffering from hunger, thirst, and deadly cold; yet not one of them attempted to escape or murmured a wish to abandon the enterprise. Even when the third morning dawned there was no better prospect of proceeding; for the remorseless east wind still blew a gale against them, and the shoals which beset their path had become more dangerous than ever. It was, however, absolutely necessary to recruit exhausted nature, unless the adventurers were to drop powerless on the threshold when they should at last arrive at their destination. In all secrecy they went ashore at a lonely castle called Nordam, where they remained to

[5] Bor, Reyd, Meteren, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*

refresh themselves until about eleven at night, when one of the boatmen came to them with the intelligence that the wind had changed and was now blowing freshly in from the sea. Yet the voyage of a few leagues, on which they were embarked, lasted nearly two whole days longer. On Saturday afternoon they passed through the last sluice, and at about three o'clock the last boom was shut behind them. There was no retreat possible for them now. The seventy were to take the strong castle and city of Breda or to lay down their lives, every man of them. No quarter and short shrift—such was their certain destiny, should that half-crippled, half-frozen little band not succeed in their task before another sunrise.

They were now in the outer harbour and not far from the watergate which led into the inner castle-haven. Presently an officer of the guard put off in a skiff and came on board the vessel. He held a little conversation with the two boatmen, observed that the castle was much in want of fuel, took a survey of the turf with which the ship was apparently laden, and then lounged into the little cabin. Here he was only separated by a sliding trap-door from the interior of the vessel. Those inside could hear and see his every movement. Had there been a single cough or sneeze from within, the true character of the cargo, then making its way into the castle, would have been discovered and every man would within ten minutes have been butchered. But the officer, unsuspecting, soon took his departure, saying that he would send some men to warp the vessel into the castle dock.

Meantime, as the adventurers were making their way slowly towards the watergate, they struck upon a hidden obstruction in the river and the deeply laden vessel sprang a leak. In a few minutes those inside were sitting up to their knees in water—a circumstance which scarcely improved their already sufficiently dismal condition. The boatmen vigorously plied the pumps to save the vessel from sinking outright ; a party of Italian soldiers soon arrived on the shore, and in the course of a couple of hours they had laboriously dragged the concealed Hollanders into the inner

harbour and made their vessel fast, close to the guard-house of the castle.

And now a crowd of all sorts came on board. The winter nights had been long and fearfully cold, and there was almost a dearth of fuel both in town and fortress. A gang of labourers set to work discharging the turf from the vessel with such rapidity that the departing daylight began to shine in upon the prisoners much sooner than they wished. Moreover, the thorough wetting, to which after all their other inconveniences they had just been exposed in their narrow escape from foundering, had set the whole party sneezing and coughing. Never was a catarrh so sudden, so universal, or so ill-timed. Lieutenant Held, unable to control the violence of his cough, drew his dagger and eagerly implored his next neighbour to stab him to the heart, lest his infirmity should lead to the discovery of the whole party. But the calm and wary skipper who stood on the deck instantly commanded his companion to work at the pump with as much clatter as possible, assuring the persons present that the hold was nearly full of water. By this means the noise of the coughing was effectually drowned. Most thoroughly did the bold boatman deserve the title of dare-devil, bestowed by his more faint-hearted uncle. Calmly looking death in the face, he stood there quite at his ease, exchanging jokes with his old acquaintances, chaffering with the eager purchasers of peat, shouting most noisy and superfluous orders to the one man who composed his crew, doing his utmost, in short, to get rid of his customers and to keep enough of the turf on board to conceal the conspirators.[6]

At last, when the case seemed almost desperate, he loudly declared that sufficient had been unladen for that evening and that it was too dark and he too tired for further work. So, giving a handful of stivers among the workmen, he bade them go ashore at once and have some beer and come next morning for the rest of the cargo. Fortunately, they accepted his hospitable proposition and took their departure. Only the

[6] Reyd. *ubi sup.*

servant of the captain of the guard lingered behind, complaining that the turf was not as good as usual and that his master would never be satisfied with it.

"Ah!" returned the cool skipper, "*the best part of the cargo is underneath. This is expressly reserved for the captain. He is sure to get enough of it to-morrow.*"[7]

Thus admonished, the servant departed and the boatman was left to himself. His companion had gone on shore with secret orders to make the best of his way to Prince Maurice, to inform him of the arrival of the ship within the fortress, and of the important fact which they had just learned, that Governor Lanzavecchia, who had heard rumours of some projected enterprise and who suspected that the object aimed at was Gertruydenberg, had suddenly taken his departure for that city, leaving as his lieutenant his nephew Paolo, a raw lad quite incompetent to provide for the safety of Breda.[8]

A little before midnight, Captain Heraugiere made a brief address to his comrades in the vessel, telling them that the hour for carrying out their undertaking had at length arrived. Retreat was impossible, defeat was certain death, only in complete victory lay their own safety and a great advantage for the commonwealth. It was an honor to them to be selected for such an enterprise. To show cowardice now would be an eternal shame for them, and he would be the man to strike dead with his own hand any traitor or poltroon. But if, as he doubted not, every one was prepared to do his duty, their success was assured, and he was himself ready to take the lead in confronting every danger.

He then divided the little band into two companies, one under himself to attack the main guard-house, the other under Fervet to seize the arsenal of the fortress.

Noiselessly they stole out of the ship where they had so long been confined, and stood at last on the ground within

[7] Reyd. This answer, which is historical, is as good a specimen of ready wit in an emergency as is often met with in real life.

[8] Bentivoglio, Bor, Meteren, Reyd, *ubi sup.*

the precincts of the castle. Heraugiere marched straight to the guard-house.

"Who goes there?" cried a sentinel, hearing some movement in the darkness.

"A friend," replied the captain, seizing him by the throat, and commanding him, if he valued his life, to keep silence except when addressed and then to speak in a whisper.

"How many are there in the garrison?" muttered Heraugiere.

"Three hundred and fifty," whispered the sentinel.

"How many?" eagerly demanded the nearest followers, not hearing the reply.

"He says there are but fifty of them," said Heraugiere, prudently suppressing the three hundred, in order to encourage his comrades.

Quietly as they had made their approach, there was nevertheless a stir in the guard-house. The captain of the watch sprang into the courtyard.

"Who goes there?" he demanded in his turn.

"A friend," again replied Heraugiere, striking him dead with a single blow as he spoke.

Others emerged with torches. Heraugiere was slightly wounded, but succeeded, after a brief struggle, in killing a second assailant. His followers set upon the watch who retreated into the guard-house. Heraugiere commanded his men to fire through the doors and windows, and in a few minutes every one of the enemy lay dead.

It was not a moment for making prisoners or speaking of quarter. Meantime Fervet and his band had not been idle. The magazine-house of the castle was seized, its defenders slain. Young Lanzavecchia made a sally from the palace, was wounded and driven back together with a few of his adherents.

The rest of the garrison fled helter-skelter into the town. Never had the musketeers of Italy—for they all belonged to Spinola's famous Sicilian Legion—behaved so badly.[9] They

[9] "Non fece mai la soldatesca Italiana più indegna attione di questa," says Cardinal Bentivoglio, *loc. cit.*

did not even take the precaution to destroy the bridge between the castle and the town as they fled panic-stricken before seventy Hollanders. Instead of encouraging the burghers to their support they spread dismay, as they ran, through every street.

Young Lanzavecchia, penned into a corner of the castle, began to parley; hoping for a rally before a surrender should be necessary. In the midst of the negotiation and a couple of hours before dawn, Hohenlo, duly apprised by the boatman, arrived with the vanguard of Maurice's troops before the field-gate of the fort. A vain attempt was made to force this portal open, but the winter's ice had fixed it fast. Hohenlo was obliged to batter down the palisade near the water-gate and enter by the same road through which the fatal turf-boat had passed.

Soon after he had marched into the town at the head of a strong detachment, Prince Maurice himself arrived in great haste, attended by Philip Nassau, the Admiral Justinus Nassau, Count Solms, Peter van der Does, and Sir Francis Vere, and followed by another body of picked troops; the musicians playing merrily that national air, then as now so dear to Netherlanders—

"Wilhelmus van Nassouwen
Ben ick van Duytsem bloed."

The fight was over. Some forty of the garrison had been killed, but not a man of the attacking party. The burgomaster sent a trumpet to the prince asking permission to come to the castle to arrange a capitulation; and before sunrise, the city and fortress of Breda had surrendered to the authority of the States-General and of his Excellency.[10]

The terms were moderate. The plundering was commuted

[10] Bor, Bentivoglio, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Count William Lewis in a letter to his father, dated 1 March, O. S. 1590, in giving a very brief account of this enterprise, speaks of *three* turf vessels as having been employed; "in drie torff schuiten unter dem holtz verborgen 80 soldaten," but this statement is so much at variance with every other account, and especially with the elaborate narrative of Eberhard van Reyd, secretary to Count William Lewis, that I cannot doubt the Count had at first been misinformed. Groen v. Prinsterer Archives, &c. II. serie i. 127.

for the payment of two months' wages to every soldier engaged in the affair. Burghers who might prefer to leave the city were allowed to do so with protection to life and property. Those who were willing to remain loyal citizens were not to be molested, in their consciences or their households, in regard to religion. The public exercise of Catholic rites was however suspended until the States-General should make some universal provision on this subject.

Subsequently, it must be allowed, the bargain of commutation proved a bad one for the burghers. Seventy men had in reality done the whole work, but so many soldiers, belonging to the detachments who marched in after the fortress had been taken, came forward to claim their months' wages as to bring the whole amount required above one hundred thousand florins. The Spaniards accordingly reproached Prince Maurice with having fined his own patrimonial city more heavily than Alexander Farnese had mulcted Antwerp, which had been made to pay but four hundred thousand florins, a far less sum in proportion to the wealth and importance of the place.

Already the Prince of Parma, in the taking of Breda, saw verified his predictions of the disasters about to fall on the Spanish interests in the Netherlands, by reason of Philip's obstinate determination to concentrate all his energies on the invasion of France. Alexander had been unable, in the midst of preparations for his French campaign, to arrest this sudden capture, but his Italian blood was on fire at the ignominy which had come upon the soldiership of his countrymen. Five companies of foot and one of horse—picked troops of Spain and Italy—had surrendered a wealthy, populous town and a well-fortified castle to a mud-scow, and had fled shrieking in dismay from the onset of seventy frost-bitten Hollanders.

It was too late to save the town, but he could punish, as it deserved, the pusillanimity of the garrison.

Three captains—one of them rejoicing in the martial name of Cesar Guerra—were publicly beheaded in Brussels. A

fourth, Ventimiglia, was degraded but allowed to escape with life, on account of his near relationship to the Duke of Terranova, while Governor Lanzavecchia was obliged to resign the command of Gertruydenberg. The great commander knew better than to encourage the yielding up of cities and fortresses by a mistaken lenity to their unlucky defenders.[11]

Prince Maurice sent off letters the same night announcing his success to the States-General. Hohenlo wrote pithily to Olden-Barneveld—"The castle and town of Breda are ours, without a single man dead on our side. The garrison made no resistance but ran distracted out of the town."[12]

The church bells rang and bonfires blazed and cannon thundered in every city in the United Provinces to commemorate this auspicious event. Olden-Barneveld, too, whose part in arranging the scheme was known to have been so valuable, received from the States-General a magnificent gilded vase with sculptured representations of the various scenes in the drama,[13] and it is probable that not more unmingled satisfaction had been caused by any one event of the war than by this surprise of Breda.

The capture of a single town, not of first-rate importance either, would hardly seem to merit so minute a description as has been given in the preceding pages. But the event, with all its details, has been preserved with singular vividness in Netherland story. As an example of daring, patience, and complete success, it has served to encourage the bold spirits of every generation and will always inspire emulation in patriotic hearts of every age and clime, while, as the first of a series of audacious enterprises by which Dutch victories were to take the place of a long procession of Spanish triumphs on the blood-stained soil of the provinces, it merits, from its chronological position, a more than ordinary attention.

In the course of the summer Prince Maurice, carrying out

[11] The story is briefly told by Parma in his correspondence with the king, 14 March, 1590. Archives of Simancas MS. [12] Bor, *ubi sup.* [13] Ibid.

into practice the lessons which he had so steadily been pondering, reduced the towns and strong places of Heyl, Flemert, Elshout, Crevecœur, Hayden, Steenberg, Rosendaal, and Osterhout.[14] But his time, during the remainder of the year 1590, was occupied with preparations for a campaign on an extended scale and with certain foreign negotiations to which it will soon be necessary to direct the reader's attention.

[14] Meteren, xvi. 294.

CHAPTER XXII.

Struggle of the United Provinces against Philip of Spain — Progress of the Republic — Influence of Geographical position on the fate of the Netherlands — Contrast offered by America — Miserable state of the so-called "obedient" provinces — Prosperity of the Commonwealth — Its internal government — Tendency to provincialism — Quibbles of the English Members of the Council, Wilkes and Bodley — Exclusion of Olden-Barneveld from the State Council — Proposals of Philip for mediation with the United Provinces — The Provinces resolutely decline all proffers of intervention.

THE United Provinces had now been engaged in unbroken civil war for a quarter of a century. It is, however, inaccurate to designate this great struggle with tyranny as a civil war. It was a war for independence, maintained by almost the whole population of the United Provinces against a foreigner, a despot, alien to their blood, ignorant of their language, a hater of their race, a scorner of their religion, a trampler upon their liberties, their laws, and institutions—a man who had publicly declared that he would rather the whole nation were exterminated than permitted to escape from subjection to the Church of Rome. Liberty of speech, liberty of the press, liberty of thought on political, religious, and social questions existed within those Dutch pastures and Frisian swamps to a far greater degree than in any other part of the world at that day; than in very many regions of Christendom in our own time. Personal slavery was unknown. In a large portion of their territory it had never existed. The free Frisians, nearest blood-relations of, in this respect, the less favoured Anglo-Saxons, had never bowed the knee to the feudal system, nor worn nor caused to be worn the collar of the serf. In the battles for human liberty no nation has stood with cleaner hands before the great tribunal, nor offered more spotless examples of patriotism to be emulated in all succeeding ages, than the Netherlanders in their gigantic

struggle with Philip of Spain. It was not a class struggling for their own privileges, but trampling on their fellow-men in a lower scale of humanity. Kings and aristocrats sneered at the vulgar republic where Hans Miller, Hans Baker, and Hans Brewer enjoyed political rights and prated of a sovereignty other than that of long-descended races and of anointed heads.[1] Yet the pikemen of Spain and the splendid cavalry and musketeers of Italy and Burgundy, who were now beginning to show their backs both behind entrenchments and in the open field to their republican foes, could not deny the valour with which the battles of liberty were fought; while Elizabeth of England, maintainer, if such ever were, of hereditary sovereignty and hater of popular freedom, acknowledged that for wisdom in council, dignity and adroitness in diplomatic debate, there were none to surpass the plain burgher statesmen of the new republic.

And at least these Netherlanders were consistent with themselves. They had come to disbelieve in the mystery of kingcraft, in the divine speciality of a few transitory mortals to direct the world's events and to dictate laws to their fellow-creatures. What they achieved was for the common good of all. They chose to live in an atmosphere of blood and fire for generation after generation rather than flinch from their struggle with despotism, for they knew that, cruel as the sea, it would swallow them all at last in one common destruction if they faltered or paused. They fought for the liberty of all. And it is for this reason that the history of this great conflict deserved to be deeply pondered by those who have the instinct of human freedom. Had the Hollanders basely sunk before the power of Spain, the proud history of England, France, and Germany would have been written in far different terms. The blood and tears which the Netherlanders caused to flow in their own stormy days have turned to blessings for remotest climes and ages. A pusillanimous peace, always possible at any period of their

[1] Bor, III. 205. Compare Fruin, Tien Jaren uit den Tagtigjarigen Oorlog p. 27. A work of remarkable research and power.

war, would have been hailed with rapture by contemporary statesmen, whose names have vanished from the world's memory; but would have sown with curses and misery the soil of Europe for succeeding ages. The territory of the Netherlands is narrow and meagre. It is but a slender kingdom now among the powers of the earth. The political grandeur of nations is determined by physical causes almost as much as by moral ones. Had the cataclysm which separated the fortunate British islands from the mainland happened to occur, instead, at a neighbouring point of the earth's crust; had the Belgian, Dutch, German and Danish Netherland floated off as one island into the sea, while that famous channel between two great rival nations remained dry land, there would have been a different history of the world.

But in the 16th century the history of one country was not an isolated chapter of personages and events. The history of the Netherlands is the history of liberty. It was now combined with the English, now with French, now with German struggles for political and religious freedom, but it is impossible to separate it from the one great complex which makes up the last half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries.

At that day the Netherland republic was already becoming a power of importance in the political family of Christendom. If, in spite of her geographical disadvantages, she achieved so much, how much vaster might her power have grown, how much stronger through her example might popular institutions throughout the world have become, and how much more pacific the relations of European tribes, had nature been less niggard in her gifts to the young commonwealth. On the sea she was strong, for the ocean is the best of frontiers; but on land her natural boundaries faded vaguely away, without strong physical demarcations and with no sharply defined limits of tongue, history or race. Accident or human caprice seemed to have divided German Highland from German Netherland; Belgic Gaul from the rest of the

Gallic realm. And even from the slender body, which an arbitrary destiny had set off for centuries into a separate organism, tyranny and religious bigotry had just hewn another portion away. But the commonwealth was already too highly vitalized to permit peaceful dismemberment. Only the low organisms can live in all their parts after violent separations. The trunk remained, bleeding but alive and vigorous, while the amputated portion lay for centuries in fossilized impotence.

Never more plainly than in the history of this commonwealth was the geographical law manifested by which the fate of nations is so deeply influenced. Courage, enterprise amounting almost to audacity, and a determined will confronted for a long lapse of time the inexorable, and permitted a great empire to germinate out of a few sand-banks held in defiance of the ocean, and protected from human encroachments on the interior only by the artificial barrier of custom-house and fort.

Thus foredoomed at birth, it must increase our admiration of human energy and of the sustaining influence of municipal liberty that the republic, even if transitory, should yet have girdled the earth with its possessions and held for a considerable period so vast a portion of the world in fee.

What a lesson to our transatlantic commonwealth, whom bountiful nature had blessed at her birth beyond all the nations of history and seemed to speed upon an unlimited career of freedom and peaceful prosperity, should she be capable at the first alarm on her track to throw away her inestimable advantages! If all history is not a mockery and a fable, she may be sure that the nation which deliberately carves itself in pieces and substitutes artificial boundaries for the natural and historic ones, condemns itself either to extinction or to the lower life of political insignificance and petty warfare, with the certain loss of liberty and national independence at last. Better a terrible struggle, better the sacrifice of prosperity and happiness for years, than the

eternal setting of that great popular hope, the United American Republic.[1]

I speak in this digression only of the relations of physical nature to liberty and nationality, making no allusion to the equally stringent moral laws which no people can violate and yet remain in health and vigour.

Despite a quarter of a century of what is commonly termed civil war, the United Netherlands were prosperous and full of life. It was in the provinces which had seceded from the union of Utrecht that there was silence as of the grave, destitution, slavery, abject submission to a foreign foe. The leaders in the movement which had brought about the scission of 1579—commonly called the 'Reconciliation'—enjoyed military and civil posts under a foreign tyrant, but were poorly rewarded for subserviency in fighting against their own brethren by contumely on the part of their masters. As for the mass of the people it would be difficult to find a desolation more complete than that recorded of the "obedient" provinces. Even as six years before, wolves littered their whelps in deserted farm-houses, cane-brake and thicket usurped the place of cornfield and orchard, robbers swarmed on the highways once thronged by a most thriving population, nobles begged their bread in the streets of cities whose merchants once entertained emperors and whose wealth and traffic were the wonder of the world, while the Spanish viceroy formally permitted the land in the agricultural districts to be occupied and farmed by the first comer for his own benefit, until the vanished proprietors of the soil should make their re-appearance.[2]

"Administered without justice or policy," said a Netherlander who was intensely loyal to the king and a most uncompromising Catholic, "eaten up and abandoned for that purpose to the arbitrary will of foreigners who suck the substance and marrow of the land without benefit to the king, gnaw the obedient cities to the bones, and plunder the open defenceless country at their pleasure, it may be imagined

[1] Written in 1863. [2] Meteren, xvi. 297.

how much satisfaction these provinces take in their condition. Commerce and trade have ceased in a country which traffic alone has peopled, for without it no human habitation could be more miserable and poor than our land."[3]

Nothing could be more gloomy than the evils thus described by the Netherland statesman and soldier, except the remedy which he suggested. The obedient provinces, thus scourged and blasted for their obedience, were not advised to improve their condition by joining hands with their sister States, who had just constituted themselves by their noble resistance to royal and ecclesiastical tyranny into a free and powerful commonwealth. On the contrary, two great sources of regeneration and prosperity were indicated, but very different ones from those in which the republic had sought and found her strength. In the first place, it was suggested as indispensable that the obedient provinces should have more Jesuits and more Friars. The mendicant orders should be summoned to renewed exertions, and the king should be requested to send seminary priests to every village in numbers proportionate to the population, who should go about from house to house, counting the children, and seeing that they learned their catechism if their parents did not teach them,

[3] Discours du Seigneur de Champagny sur les affaires des Pays Bas, 21 Dec. 1589. Bibl. de Bourgogne, MS. No. 12,962.

"Considerando assi mismo el mal termino que con todos usa, los pocos consejos el desauctorisar los que el Rey a puesto, y que solo lo emprende y maneje todo con sus hechuras para aprovecharlas, y la increyble disorden no solo en lo politico mas en la gente de guerra, haze que no solo todos los de los estados mas aun que quantos con el han de negociar pierdan toda opinion no solo de su discretion o prudencia mas del respeto que devria tener al Rey. Asi manejandose todo sin justicia y policia, comidos todos estos estados y abandonados por esta al alvidrio y govierno de estrangeros qui chupan la sustancia del pays sin beneficio del Rey, y solos teniendo credito con este hombre (Farnese) royendose quantas villas ternan a l'obediencia del Rey hasta los huessos y el plat pays sin defensa contra el enemigo que come y roba a todas partas como quiere—se puede coligar desto la satisfaccion que del tendran todos estados que indifferentemente assi prelados, nobles como villas y pueblos no solo murmuran del mas lo dizen y a vozes," etc. etc. etc. "demas que destos los rebeldes s'endurescen diziendo que no se deven fiar de nuestras promesas, representando la miseria y calamidad en que viven los reduzidos por la violencia y cohechos de nuestra propria gente, governandose todo sin policia, justicia, verdad ni consejo por cabezas codiciosas sin otra mira que a su provecho y ninguna al del Rey . . . . . que solo el trato puebla, porque cessando la comodidad del, no ay abitacion mas miserable y pobre."

and, even in case they did, examining whether it was done thoroughly and without deception.

In the second place it was laid down as important that the bishops should confirm no one who had not been sufficiently catechized. "And if the mendicant orders," said Champagny, "are not numerous enough for these catechizations, the Jesuits might charge themselves therewith, not more and not less than the said mendicants, some of each being deputed to each parish. To this end it would be well if his Majesty should obtain from the Pope a command to the Jesuits to this effect, since otherwise they might not be willing to comply. It should also be ordered that all Jesuits, natives of these provinces, should return hither, instead of wandering about in other regions as if their help were not so necessary here."[4]

It was also recommended that the mendicant friars should turn their particular attention to Antwerp, and that one of them should preach in French, another in German, another in English, every day at the opening of the Exchange.

With these appliances it was thought that Antwerp would revive out of its ruins and, despite the blockade of its river, renew its ancient commercial glories. Founded on the substantial rocks of mendicancy and jesuitism, it might again triumph over its rapidly rising rival, the heretic Amsterdam, which had no better basis for its grandeur than religious and political liberty, and uncontrolled access to the ocean.

Such were the aspirations of a distinguished and loyal

[4] "Por lo qual primero encarguense de nuevo todas las ordenes mendicantes en las quales santissamente el Rey n^ro^ Señor introduze seminarios a que como siempre en estos estados han sido el socorro de los curas que a cada parochia acuden dellos a catechisar conforme al numero de las casas que debaxo de las parochias resultan, y de casa en casa vayan, scaviendo que niños ay, y que entienden en catechisarlos quando los mismos padres no lo hagan, y aunque esso sea que lo hagan no sea sin su examinacion porque no aya engaño. . . . . Quando tambien no bastan para estas catecisationes las ordenes mendicantes, pueden se encargar deste los Jesuitas ne mas ne menos con dichos mendicantes, deputando algunos dellos juntamente, con esotros por las parochias. Para esto mesmo seria bien su Mag^d^ impetrasse del papa mandado a los Jesuitas porque de otra manera no querran submitirse a ello, y para que buelvan a estos estados todos los Jesuitas naturales del que distraydos en otras provincias, dexan esta como si aqui no fuesse tanto menester su asistencia." . . . . .—Ibid.

Netherlander for the regeneration of his country. Such were his opinions as to the true sources of the wealth and greatness of nations. Can we wonder that the country fell to decay, or that this experienced statesman and brave soldier should himself, after not many years, seek to hide his dishonoured head under the cowl of a monk ?

The coast of the obedient provinces was thoroughly blockaded. The United Provinces commanded the sea, their cruisers, large and small, keeping diligent watch off every port and estuary of the Flemish coast, so that not a herring-boat could enter without their permission. Antwerp, when it fell into the hands of the Spaniard, sank for ever from its proud position. The city which Venetians but lately had confessed with a sigh to be superior in commercial grandeur to their own magnificent capital, had ceased to be a seaport. Shut in from the ocean by Flushing—firmly held by an English garrison as one of the cautionary towns for the Queen's loan — her world-wide commerce withered before men's eyes. Her population was dwindling to not much more than half its former numbers, while Ghent, Bruges, and other cities were diminished by two-thirds.

On the other hand, the commerce and manufactures of the United Republic had enormously augmented. Its bitterest enemies bore witness to the sagacity and success by which its political affairs were administered, and to its vast superiority in this respect over the obedient provinces. "The rebels are not ignorant of our condition," said Champagny, "they are themselves governed with consummate wisdom, and they mock at those who submit themselves to the Duke of Parma. They are the more confirmed in their rebellion, when they see how many are thronging from us to them, complaining of such bad government, and that all take refuge in flight who can from the misery and famine which it has caused throughout these provinces !"[5] The industrial population had flowed from the southern provinces into the

[5] Discours du Seigneur de Champagny. "Esto no ignoran los Rebeldes que con grandissima policia governados se burlan de lo que se

north, in obedience to an irresistible law. The workers in iron, paper, silk, linen, lace, the makers of brocade, tapestry, and satin, as well as of all the coarser fabrics, had fled from the land of oppression to the land of liberty. Never in the history of civilisation had there been a more rapid development of human industry than in Holland during these years of bloodiest warfare. The towns were filled to overflowing. Amsterdam multiplied in wealth and population as fast as Antwerp shrank. Almost as much might be said of Middelburg, Enkhuyzen, Horn, and many other cities. It is the epoch to which the greatest expansion of municipal architecture is traced. Warehouses, palaces, docks, arsenals, fortifications, dykes, splendid streets and suburbs, were constructed on every side, and still there was not room for the constantly increasing population, large numbers of which habitually dwelt in the shipping. For even of that narrow span of earth called the province of Holland, one-third was then interior water, divided into five considerable lakes, those of Harlem, Schermer, Beemster, Waert, and Purmer. The sea was kept out by a magnificent system of dykes under the daily superintendence of a board of officers, called dyke-graves, while the rain-water, which might otherwise have drowned the soil thus painfully reclaimed, was pumped up by windmills and drained off through sluices opening and closing with the movement of the tides.

The province of Zeeland was one vast "polder." It was encircled by an outer dyke of forty Dutch, equal to one hundred and fifty English, miles in extent, and traversed by many interior barriers. The average cost of dyke-building was sixty florins the rod of twelve feet, or 84,000 florins the Dutch mile. The total cost of the Zeeland dykes was estimated at 3,360,000 florins, besides the annual repairs.[6]

But it was on the sea that the Netherlanders were really

sumetten al D. de Parma y se confirman mas en su rebelion, con ver quantos van a ellos quexosos de tan mal govierno, y quantos pueden, huyen con la miseria, hambre, pobreza y carestia causada generalmente por esto en todas partes," etc., etc., etc.

[6] Meteren, xvi. 288, 289, 290.

at home, and they always felt it in their power—as their last resource against foreign tyranny—to bury their land for ever in the ocean, and to seek a new country at the ends of the earth. It has always been difficult to doom to political or personal slavery a nation accustomed to maritime pursuits. Familiarity with the boundless expanse of ocean, and the habit of victoriously contending with the elements in their stormy strength, would seem to inspire a consciousness in mankind of human dignity and worth. With the exception of Spain, the chief seafaring nations of the world were already protestant. The counter-league, which was to do battle so strenuously with the Holy Confederacy, was essentially a maritime league. "All the maritime heretics of the world, since heresy is best suited to navigators, will be banded together," said Champagny, "and then woe to the Spanish Indies, which England and Holland are already threatening."[7]

The Netherlanders had been noted from earliest times for a free-spoken and independent personal demeanour. At this epoch they were taking the lead of the whole world in marine adventure. At least three thousand vessels of between one hundred and four hundred tons, besides innumerable doggers, busses, cromstevens, and similar craft used on the rivers and in fisheries, were to be found in the United Provinces, and one thousand, it was estimated, were annually built.[8]

They traded to the Baltic regions for honey, wax, tallow, lumber, iron, turpentine, hemp. They brought from farthest Indies and from America all the fabrics of ancient civilisation, all the newly discovered products of a virgin soil, and dispensed them among the less industrious nations of the earth. Enterprise, led on and accompanied by science, was already planning the boldest flights into the unknown yet made by mankind, and it will soon be necessary to direct attention to those famous arctic voyages, made by Hollanders in pursuit of the north-west passage to Cathay, in which as much heroism, audacity, and scientific intelligence were displayed as

[7] Discours du Seigneur de Champagny. "Todos los herejes del oceano que lo son quasi todos sino sola España . . . . y pues *la heresia es lo que mas conforme en estos maritimos*," etc., etc., etc.

[8] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

in later times have made so many men belonging to both branches of the Anglo-Saxon race illustrious. A people, engaged in perennial conflict with a martial and sacerdotal despotism the most powerful in the world, could yet spare enough from its superfluous energies to confront the dangers of the polar oceans, and to bring back treasures of science to enrich the world.

Such was the spirit of freedom. Inspired by its blessed influence this vigorous and inventive little commonwealth triumphed over all human, all physical obstacles in its path. It organised armies on new principles to drive the most famous legions of history from its soil. It built navies to help rescue, at critical moments, the cause of England, of protestantism, of civil liberty, and even of French nationality. More than all, by its trade with its arch-enemy, the republic constantly multiplied its resources for destroying his power and aggrandizing its own.

The war navy of the United Provinces was a regular force of one hundred ships—large at a period when a vessel of thirteen hundred tons was a monster—together with an indefinite number of smaller craft, which could be put into the public service on short notice.[9] In those days of close quarters and light artillery a merchant ship was converted into a cruiser by a very simple process. The navy was a self-supporting one, for it was paid by the produce of convoy fees and licenses to trade. It must be confessed that a portion of these revenues savoured much of black-mail to be levied on friend and foe; for the distinctions between freebooter, privateer, pirate, and legitimate sea-robber were not very closely drawn in those early days of seafaring.

Prince Maurice of Nassau was lord high admiral, but he was obliged to listen to the counsels of various provincial boards of admiralty, which often impeded his action and interfered with his schemes.

It cannot be denied that the inherent vice of the Netherland polity was already a tendency to decentralisation and

[9] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

provincialism. The civil institutions of the country, in their main characteristics, have been frequently sketched in these pages. At this period they had entered almost completely into the forms which were destined to endure until the commonwealth fell in the great crash of the French Revolution. Their beneficial effects were more visible now—sustained and bound together as the nation was by the sense of a common danger, and by the consciousness of its daily developing strength—than at a later day when prosperity and luxury had blunted the fine instincts of patriotism.

The supreme power, after the deposition of Philip, and the refusal by France and by England to accept the sovereignty of the provinces, was definitely lodged in the States-General. But the States-General did not technically represent the people. Its members were not elected by the people. It was a body composed of delegates from each provincial assembly, of which there were now five—Holland, Zeeland, Friesland, Utrecht, and Gelderland. Each provincial assembly consisted again of delegates, not from the inhabitants of the provinces, but from the magistracies of the cities. Those magistracies, again, were not elected by the citizens. They elected themselves by renewing their own vacancies, and were, in short, immortal corporations. Thus, in final analysis, the supreme power was distributed and localised among the mayors and aldermen of a large number of cities, all independent alike of the people below and of any central power above.

It is true that the nobles, as a class, had a voice in the provincial and in the general assembly, both for themselves and as technical representatives of the smaller towns and of the rural population. But, as a matter of fact, the influence of this caste had of late years very rapidly diminished, through its decrease in numbers, and the far more rapid increase in wealth and power of the commercial and manufacturing classes. Individual nobles were constantly employed in the military, civil, and diplomatic service of the republic, but their body had ceased to be a

power. It had been the policy of William the Silent to increase the number of cities entitled to send deputies to the States; for it was among the cities that his resistance to the tyranny of Spain, and his efforts to obtain complete independence for his country, had been mainly supported. Many of the great nobles, as has been seen in these pages, denounced the liberator and took sides with the tyrant. Lamoral Egmont had walked to the scaffold to which Philip had condemned him, chanting a prayer for Philip's welfare. Egmont's eldest son was now foremost in the Spanish army, doing battle against his own country in behalf of the tyrant who had taken his father's life. Aremberg and Ligny, Arschot, Chimay, Croy, Capres, Montigny, and most of the great patrician families of the Netherlands fought on the royal side.

The revolution which had saved the country from perdition and created the great Netherland republic was a burgher revolution, and burgher statesmen now controlled the State. The burgher class of Europe is not the one that has been foremost in the revolutionary movements of history, or that has distinguished itself—especially in more modern times—by a passionate love of liberty. It is always easy to sneer at Hans Miller and Hans Baker, and at the country where such plebeians are powerful. Yet the burghers played a prominent part in the great drama which forms my theme, and there has rarely been seen a more solid or powerful type of their class than the burgher statesman, John of Olden-Barneveld, who, since the death of William the Silent and the departure of Lord Leicester, had mainly guided the destinies of Holland. Certainly no soldier nor statesman who ever measured intellects with that potent personage was apt to treat his genius otherwise than with profound respect.

But it is difficult to form a logical theory of government, except on the fiction of divine right as a basis, unless the fact of popular sovereignty, as expressed by a majority, be frankly accepted in spite of philosophical objections.

In the Netherlands there was no king, and strictly speaking

no people. But this latter and fatal defect was not visible in the period of danger and of contest. The native magistrates of that age were singularly pure, upright, and patriotic. Of this there is no question whatever. And the people acquiesced cheerfully in their authority, not claiming a larger representation than such as they virtually possessed in the multiple power exercised over them, by men moving daily among them, often of modest fortunes and of simple lives. Two generations later, and in the wilderness of Massachusetts, the early American colonists voluntarily placed in the hands of their magistrates, few in number, unlimited control of all the functions of government, and there was hardly an instance known of an impure exercise of authority. Yet out of that simple kernel grew the least limited and most powerful democracy ever known.

In the later days of Netherland history a different result became visible, and with it came the ruin of the State. The governing class, of burgher origin, gradually separated itself from the rest of the citizens, withdrew from commercial pursuits, lived on hereditary fortunes in the exercise of functions which were likewise virtually hereditary, and so became an oligarchy. This result, together with the physical causes already indicated, made the downfall of the commonwealth probable whenever it should be attacked by an overwhelming force from without.

The States-General, however, at this epoch—although they had in a manner usurped the sovereignty, which in the absence of a feudal lord really belonged to the whole people, and had silently repossessed themselves of those executive functions which they had themselves conferred upon the state council—were at any rate without self-seeking ambition. The Hollanders, as a race, were not office seekers, but were singularly docile to constituted authority, while their regents—as the municipal magistrates were commonly called —were not very far removed above the mass by birth or habitual occupation. The republic was a social and political fact, against which there was no violent antagonism either

of laws or manners, and the people, although not technically existing, in reality was all in all. In Netherland story the People is ever the true hero. It was an almost unnoticed but significant revolution—that by which the state council was now virtually deprived of its authority. During Leicester's rule it had been a most important college of administration. Since his resignation it had been entrusted by the States-General with high executive functions, especially in war matters. It was an assembly of learned counsellors appointed from the various provinces for wisdom and experience, usually about eighteen in number, and sworn in all things to be faithful to the whole republic. The allegiance of all was rendered to the nation. Each individual member was required to "forswear his native province in order to be true to the generality." They deliberated in common for the general good, and were not hampered by instructions from the provincial diets, nor compelled to refer to those diets for decision when important questions were at issue. It was an independent executive committee for the whole republic.[10]

But Leicester had made it unpopular. His intrigues, in the name of democracy, to obtain possession of sovereign power, to inflame the lower classes against the municipal magistracies, and to excite the clergy to claim a political influence to which they were not entitled and which was most mischievous in its effects, had exposed the state council, with which he had been in the habit of consulting, to suspicion.

The Queen of England, by virtue of her treaty, had the right to appoint two of her subjects to be members of

[10] "Sa Majesté voit journellement par expérience qu'à cause que l'autorité qui appartient au conseil d'état de ces provinces suivant les articles du contract faict entre S. M. et ces pays cy luy est en plusieurs points du tout ostée et quasi en tout fort raccourcie par V. S. De la naist une telle confusion et désordre au gouvernement de ces provinces que non seulement c'est l'occasion de beaucoup de malentenduz et mescontentemens, mais aussi faict que l'ennemi n'est si vivement repoussé comme il pourrait estre, et consequemment met S. M. et ces provinces en plus grand trouble et despense qu'aultrement ne requerroit le maintien de ces guerres; eu esgard de quoi je suis chargé de par S. M. de vous signifier, qu'elle desire de V. S. que quelque pouvoir qui a este baille au conseil d'etat par la susdicte convention, soit aussi pleinement restitué et establi," etc., etc., etc. (Paper sent to the States-General by Sir Thomas Bodley, 26 April, 1590; Archives of the Hague MS.)

the council. The governor of her auxiliary forces was also entitled to a seat there. Since the malpractices of Leicester and the danger to which the country had been subjected in consequence had been discovered, it was impossible that there should be very kindly feeling toward England in the public mind, however necessary a sincere alliance between the two countries was known to be for the welfare of both.

The bickering of the two English councillors, Wilkes and Bodley, and of the governor of the English contingent with the Hollanders, was incessant. The Englishmen went so far as to claim the right of veto upon all measures passed by the council, but the States-General indignantly replied that the matters deliberated and decided upon by that board were their own affairs, not the state affairs of England. The two members and the military officer who together represented her Majesty were entitled to participate in the deliberations and to vote with their brother members. For them to claim the right, however, at will to annul the proceedings was an intolerable assumption, and could not be listened to for a moment. Certainly it would have been strange had two Dutchmen undertaken to veto every measure passed by the Queen's council at Richmond or Windsor, and it was difficult to say on what article of the contract this extraordinary privilege was claimed by Englishmen at the Hague.[11]

Another cause of quarrel was the inability of the Englishmen to understand the language in which the debates of the state council were held.

According to a custom not entirely unexampled in parliamentary history the members of assembly and council made use of their native tongue in discussing the state affairs

[11] "In den Raedt van State deser Landen," said the States-General to the English councillors, "worden gehandelt, geconsulteert ende geresolveert de saecken den staet derzelver Landen aengaende ende niet den staet van Engelant. Ende daeromme en connen die staten niet verstaen dat tot dienste van dese Landen ofte van haer Ma^t by forme van een negative voix can worden geprocedeert omme den voortganct der resolutie te beletten, maer hebben den gouverneur van hare Ma^t secours ende de Raeden by haere Ma^t geintroduceert hare stemmen negative ofte affirmative te geven als andere van den Raede." (Answer to Wilkes and Bodley, 15 Oct. 1590; Hague Archives MS.)

of their native land. It was however considered a grievance by the two English members that the Dutchmen should speak Dutch, and it was demanded in the Queen's name that they should employ some other language which a foreigner could more easily understand.[12]

The Hollanders however refused this request, not believing that in a reversed case her Majesty's Council or Houses of Parliament would be likely or competent to carry on their discussions habitually in Italian or Latin for the benefit of a couple of strangers who might not be familiar with English. The more natural remedy would have been for the foreigners to take lessons in the tongue of the country, or to seek for an interpreter among their colleagues; especially as the States, when all the Netherlands were but provinces, had steadily refused to adopt any language but their mother tongue, even at the demand of their sovereign prince.[13]

At this moment, Sir Thomas Bodley was mainly entrusted with her Majesty's affairs at the Hague, but his overbearing demeanour, intemperate language, and passionate style of correspondence with the States and with the royal government,

[12] "S. Majesté trouvant estrange que voulsissiez que les siens demeurassent par ce moyen muets au dit conseil, requiert que dès a present et a l'avenir toutes les propositions, consultations, conferences et deliberations qui se feront au dit conseil soyent tousjours es langues Latine ou Francoise, et que les actes et registres desdictes consultations, resolutions, et deliberations se tiennent en l'une deux langues susdictes." (Wilkes and Bodley to the States-General, 20 July, 1590; Hague Archives MS.)

[13] "Alle de provincien, Steden ende Leden van dien jegenwoordig in de Unie wezende," said the States, "gebruycken de Nederlantsche spraecke, ende volgende verscheyde privilegien, ende rechten der voorscreven Landen en mogende Gecommitteerden der Staten van de respective provincien in de zaecken van den Lande geen ander als de Nederlandtsche spraecke gebruycken. Daeromme en is niet practicabael en dit puncteenige veranderinghe inne te voeren. Temin nademael die Staten der voorscreven respective provincien noyt hebben willen gedoogen dat haere Gecommitteerden in saecken der Landen vreemde spraecken zouden gebruycken; oock niettegestaende het verzoeck van haerlicker princen selfs geschiet uit wichtige ende wel gefondeerde redenen. Ende daer zulcx in eenige zaecken specialyck met veele difficulteyten is geconsenteert geweest, ten tyde als in de vergaderinge van de Staten verscheyden provincien van Walscher sprake waren comparerende hebben de princen daervan den Staten gegeven solennele acte van non-prejuditie met belofte dat zulcx niet in consequentie zoude worden getoogen. Ende hebben de ondersaten van haere Mat hen beter te laeten onderrichten in den Raedt van staet vant gunt aldaer geproponeert ende gedelibereert zal worden, dan dat de Ingesetenen deser Landen jegens de rechten ende privilegien derzelver in de beleydinghe van des Landes zaecken vreemde spraecke zouden moeten gebruycken." Ibid.

did much injury to both countries. The illustrious Walsingham—whose death in the spring of this year England had so much reason to deplore—had bitterly lamented, just before his death, having recommended so unquiet a spirit for so important a place. Ortel, envoy of the States to London, expressed his hopes that affairs would now be handled more to the satisfaction of the States; as Bodley would be obliged, since the death of Sir Francis, to address his letters to the Lord High Treasurer, with whom it would be impossible for him to obtain so much influence as he had enjoyed with the late Secretary of State.[14]

Moreover it was exactly at this season that the Advocate of Holland, Olden-Barneveld, was excluded from the state council.[15] Already the important province of Holland was dissatisfied with its influence in that body. Bearing one-half of the whole burthen of the war it was not content with one quarter of the council vote, and very soon it became the custom for the States-General to conduct all the most important affairs of the republic.[16] The state council complained that even in war matters it was not consulted, and that most important enterprises were undertaken by Prince Maurice without its knowledge, and on advice of the Advocate alone. Doubtless this was true, and thus, most unfortunately, the commonwealth was degraded to a confederacy instead of becoming an incorporate federal State. The members of the States-General—as it has been seen—were responsible only to their constituents, the separate provinces. They avowed allegiance, each to his own province, none to the central government. Moreover they were not representatives, but envoys, appointed by petty provinces, bound by written orders, and obliged to consult at every step with their sovereigns at home. The Netherland polity was thus stamped almost at its birth with a narrow provincialism. Delay and hesitation thus necessarily engendered were overcome in the days of danger by patriotic fervour. The instinct of union for the sake of the national existence was sufficiently strong, and

[14] Bor, III. xxvii. 530. [15] Fruin, 24. [16] Ibid.

the robust, practical common sense of the people sufficiently enlightened to prevent this weakness from degenerating into impotence so long as the war pressure remained to mould them into a whole. But a day was to come for bitterly rueing this paralysis of the imperial instincts of the people, this indefinite decentralisation of the national strength.

For the present, the legislative and executive body was the States-General. But the States-General were in reality the States provincial, and the States provincial were the city municipalities, among which the magistracies of Holland were preponderant.

Ere long it became impossible for an individual to resist the decrees of the civic authorities. In 1591, the States-General passed a resolution by which these arrogant corporations virtually procured their exemption from any process at the suit of a private person to be placed on record. So far could the principle of sovereignty be pulverized. City council boards had become supreme.[17]

It was naturally impossible during the long continuance of this great struggle, that neutral nations should not be injuriously affected by it in a variety of ways. And as a matter of course neutral nations were disposed to counsel peace. Peace, peace, peace was the sigh of the bystanders whose commerce was impeded, whose international relations were complicated, and whose own security was endangered in the course of the bloody conflict. It was however not very much the fashion of that day for governments to obtrude advice upon each other, or to read to each other moral lectures. It was assumed that when the expense and sacrifice of war had been incurred, it was for cause, and the discovery had not yet been made that those not immediately interested in the fray were better acquainted with its merits than the combatants themselves, and were moreover endued with superhuman wisdom to see with perfect clearness that future issue which to the parties themselves was concealed.

[17] Kluit, iii. 52. Compare Fruin, iv. pp. 18–31, to whose lucid and learned exposition of the Netherland polity I am under great obligations.

Cheap apothegms upon the blessings of peace and upon the expediency of curbing the angry passions, uttered by the belligerents of yesterday to the belligerents of to-day, did not then pass current for profound wisdom.

Still the emperor Rudolph, abstaining for a time from his star-gazing, had again thought proper to make a feeble attempt at intervention in those sublunary matters which were supposed to be within his sphere.[18]

It was perfectly well known that Philip was incapable of abating one jot of his pretensions, and that to propose mediation to the United Provinces was simply to request them, for the convenience of other powers, to return to the slavery out of which, by the persistent efforts of a quarter of a century, they had struggled. Nevertheless it was formally proposed to re-open those lukewarm fountains of diplomatic commonplace in which healing had been sought during the peace negotiations of Cologne in the year 1579. But the States-General resolutely kept them sealed. They simply answered his imperial Majesty by a communication of certain intercepted correspondence between the King of Spain and his ambassador at Vienna, San Clemente, through which it was satisfactorily established that any negotiation would prove as gigantic a comedy on the part of Spain as had been the memorable conferences at Ostend, by which the invasion of England had been masked.[19]

There never was a possibility of mediation or of compromise except by complete submission on the part of the Netherlanders to Crown and Church. Both in this, as well as in previous and subsequent attempts at negotiations, the secret instructions of Philip forbade any real concessions on his side. He was always ready to negotiate, he was especially anxious to obtain a suspension of arms from the rebels during negotiation, but his agents were instructed to use great dexterity and dissimulation in order that the proposal for such armistice, as well as for negotiation at all, should appear to proceed, not from himself as was the fact, but from

[18] Meteren, xvi. 297. [19] Ibid.

the emperor as a neutral potentate. The king uniformly proposed three points ; firstly, that the rebels should reconvert themselves to the Catholic religion ; secondly, that they should return to their obedience to himself ; thirdly, that they should pay the expenses of the war. Number three was, however, usually inserted in order that, by conceding it subsequently, after much contestation, he might appear conciliatory. It was a vehicle of magnanimity towards men grown insolent with temporary success.[20] Numbers one and two were immutable.

Especially upon number one was concession impossible. "The Catholic religion is the first thing," said Philip, "and although the rebels do not cease to insist that liberty of conscience should be granted them, in order that they may preserve that which they have had during these past years, this is never to be thought of in any event." The king always made free use of the terrible weapon which the Protestant princes of Germany had placed in his hands. For indeed if it were right that one man, because possessed of hereditary power over millions of his fellow creatures, should compel them all to accept the dogmas of Luther or of Calvin because agreeable to himself, it was difficult to say why another man, in a similarly elevated position, might not compel his subjects to accept the creed of Trent, or the doctrines of Mahomet or Confucius. The Netherlanders were fighting—even more than they knew—for liberty of conscience, for equality of all religions ; not for Moses, nor for Melancthon ; for Henry, Philip, or Pius ; while Philip justly urged that no prince in Christendom permitted license. "Let them well understand," said his Majesty, "that since others who live in error, hold the opinion that vassals are to conform to the religion of their master, *it is insufferable that it should be proposed to me that my vassals should have a different religion*

[20] Minuta de instrucion al Marques de Carvalho, 25 Jan. 1592, Arch. de Simancas, MS. "Como hombres insolentes con los buenos sucesos destos dias, pidieren que se hagan con ellos algunas cosas sin fundamento, por desviarlos dellos se deben a lo menos deshecharlos con esta recompensa de gastos las otras pretenciones que tuvieren mal fundadas."

from mine—and that too being the true religion, proved by so many testimonies and miracles, while all others are deception. This must be arranged with the authority of the commissioners of the emperor, since it is well understood by them that *the vassal is never to differ from the opinion of his master.*"[21] Certainly it was worth an eighty years' war to drive such blasphemous madness as this out of human heads, whether crowned or shaven.

There was likewise a diet held during the summer of this year, of the circles of the empire nearest to the Netherlands—Westphalia, Cleves, Juliers, and Saxony—from which commissioners were deputed both to Brussels and to the Hague, to complain of the misfortunes suffered by neutral and neighbouring nations in consequence of the civil war.

They took nothing by their mission to the Duke of Parma.

22 Aug. 1590. At the Hague the deputies were heard on the 22nd August, 1590. They complained to the States-General of "brandschatting" on the border, of the holding of forts beyond the lines, and of other invasions of neutral territory, of the cruising of the war-vessels of the States off the shores and on the rivers, and of their interference with lawful traders. Threats were made of forcible intervention and reprisals.[22]

The united States replied on the 13th September. Ex-

[21] "Lo de la religion Catolica es la primera cosa; y aunque no dexaran de insistir rebeldes en que se les de libertad de concientia por conservar la que han tenido estos años, no se ha de dar lugar a esto por ninguno caso—dando les bien a entender que pues otros qui viven en errores tienen por opinion que sus vassalos se han de conformar con la religion de su Señor, no se sufre que a mi se me proponga que los mios la tengan diferente que yo, siendo esta la verdadera y probada con tantos testimonios y milagros, y todo lo demas engaño, y esto se ha de procurar con la autoridad de los comisarios del emperador pues es muy recibido entre ellos de no haberse de apartar el vassallo de la opinion de su señor." Ibid.

In July of this year Farnese had much talk with the Elector of Cologne at Spa about peace with the rebels through the mediation of the Emperor. It was agreed that a congress should be proposed at Cologne, but the suggestion was not to appear as coming from Philip, and Farnese informed his master that the Duke of Wirtemberg and the Landgrave of Hesse would both attend. Although heretics, they were described as pacific and profoundly of opinion "that in the matter of religion vassals were necessarily to conform to the will and command of their princes." Parma to Philip, 21 July, 1590; (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[22] Meteren, xvi. 295, *seqq.*

pressing deep regret that neutral nations should suffer, they pronounced it to be impossible but that some sparks from the great fire, now desolating their land, should fly over into their neighbours' ground. The States were fighting the battle of liberty against slavery, in which the future generations of Germany, as well as of the Netherlands were interested. They were combating that horrible institution, the Holy Inquisition. They were doing their best to strike down the universal monarchy of Spain, which they described as a bloodthirsty, insatiable, insolent, absolute dominion of Saracenic, Moorish Christians.[23] They warred with a system which placed inquisitors on the seats of judges, which made it unlawful to read the Scriptures, which violated all oaths, suppressed all civic freedom, trampled on all laws and customs, raised inordinate taxes by arbitrary decree, and subjected high and low to indiscriminate murder. Spain had sworn the destruction of the provinces and their subjugation to her absolute dominion, in order to carry out her scheme of universal empire. 13 Sept.

These were the deeds and designs against which the States were waging that war, concerning some inconvenient results of which their neighbours, now happily neutral, were complaining. But the cause of the States was the cause of humanity itself. This Saracenic, Moorish, universal monarchy had been seen by Germany to murder, despoil, and trample upon the Netherlands. It had murdered millions of innocent Indians and Granadians. It had kept Naples and Milan in abject slavery. It had seized Portugal. It had deliberately planned and attempted an accursed invasion of England and Ireland. It had overrun and plundered many cities of the empire. It had spread a web of secret intrigue about Scotland. At last it was sending great armies to conquer France and snatch its crown. Poor France now saw the plans of this Spanish tyranny and bewailed her misery. The subjects of her lawful king were ordered to rise against him, on account of religion and conscience. Such holy

[23] Meteren, xvi. 295, *seqq.*

pretexts were used by these Saracenic Christians in order to gain possession of that kingdom.

For all these reasons, men should not reproach the inhabitants of the Netherlands, because seeing the aims of this accursed tyranny, they had set themselves to resist it. It was contrary to reason to consider them as disturbers of the general peace, or to hold them guilty of violating their oaths or their duty to the laws of the holy empire. The States-General were sure that they had been hitherto faithful and loyal, and they were resolved to continue in that path.

As members of the holy empire, in part—as of old they were considered to be—they had rather the right to expect, instead of reproaches, assistance against the enormous power and inhuman oppression of their enemies. They had demanded it heretofore by their ambassadors, and they still continued to claim it. They urged that, according to the laws of the empire, all foreign soldiers, Spaniards, Saracens, and the like should be driven out of the limits of the empire. Through these means the German Highland and the German Netherland might be restored once more to their old friendship and unity, and might deal with each other again in amity and commerce.

If, however, such requests could not be granted they at least begged his electoral highness and the other dukes, lords, and states to put on the deeds of Netherlanders in this laborious and heavy war the best interpretation, in order that they might, with the better courage and resolution, bear those inevitable burthens which were becoming daily heavier in this task of resistance and self-protection ; in order that the provinces might not be utterly conquered, and serve, with their natural resources and advantageous situation, as *sedes et media belli* for the destruction of neighbouring States and the building up of the contemplated universal, absolute monarchy.[24]

The United Provinces had been compelled by overpowering necessity to take up arms. That which had resulted was and

[24] Meteren, xvi. 295, *seqq.*

remained *in terminis defensionis*. Their object was to protect what belonged to them, to recover that which by force or fraud had been taken from them.

In regard to excesses committed by their troops against neutral inhabitants on the border, they expressed a strong regret, together with a disposition to make all proper retribution and to cause all crimes to be punished.

They alluded to the enormous sins of this nature practised by the enemy against neutral soil. They recalled to mind that the Spaniards paid their troops ill or not at all, and that they allowed them to plunder the innocent and the neutral, while the united States had paid their troops better wages, and more punctually, than had ever been done by the greatest potentates of Europe. It was true that the States kept many cruisers off the coasts and upon the rivers, but these were to protect their own citizens and friendly traders against pirates and against the common foe. Germany derived as much benefit from this system as did the Provinces themselves.[25]

Thus did the States-General, respectfully but resolutely, decline all proffers of intervention, which, as they were well aware, could only enure to the benefit of the enemy. Thus did they avoid being entrapped into negotiations which could only prove the most lamentable of comedies.

[25] Meteren, xvi. 295, *seqq.*

CHAPTER XXIII.

Philip's scheme of aggrandizement — Projected invasion of France — Internal condition of France — Character of Henry of Navarre — Preparation for action — Battle of Ivry — Victory of the French king over the League — Reluctance of the king to attack the French capital — Siege of Paris — The pope indisposed towards the League — Extraordinary demonstration of ecclesiastics — Influence of the priests — Extremities of the siege — Attempted negotiation — State of Philip's army — Difficult position of Farnese — March of the allies to the relief of Paris — Lagny taken and the city relieved — Desertion of the king's army — Siege of Corbeil — Death of Pope Sixtus V. — Re-capture of Lagny and Corbeil — Return of Parma to the Netherlands — Result of the expedition.

THE scene of the narrative shifts to France. The history of the United Netherlands at this epoch is a world-history. Were it not so, it would have far less of moral and instruction for all time than it is really capable of affording. The battle of liberty against despotism was now fought in the hop-fields of Brabant or the polders of Friesland, now in the narrow seas which encircle England, and now on the sunny plains of Dauphiny, among the craggy inlets of Brittany, or along the high roads and rivers which lead to the gates of Paris. But everywhere a noiseless, secret, but ubiquitous negotiation was speeding with never an instant's pause to accomplish the work which lansquenettes and riders, pikemen and carabineers were contending for on a hundred battle-fields and amid a din of arms which for a quarter of a century had been the regular hum of human industry. For nearly a generation of mankind, Germans and Hollanders, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Spaniards and Italians seemed to be born into the world mainly to fight for or against a system of universal monarchy, conceived for his own benefit by a quiet old man who passed his days at a writing desk in a remote corner of Europe. It must be confessed that Philip II. gave the world work enough. Whether

—had the peoples governed themselves—their energies might not have been exerted in a different direction, and on the whole have produced more of good to the human race than came of all this blood and smoke, may be questioned.

But the divine right of kings, associating itself with the power supreme of the Church, was struggling to maintain that old mastery of mankind which awakening reason was inclined to dispute. Countries and nations being regarded as private property to be inherited or bequeathed by a few favoured individuals — provided always that those individuals were obedient to the chief-priest—it had now become right and proper for the Spanish monarch to annex Scotland, England, and France to the very considerable possessions which were already his own. Scotland he claimed by virtue of the expressed wish of Mary to the exclusion of her heretic son. France, which had been unjustly usurped by another family in times past to his detriment, and which only a mere human invention—a "pleasantry" as Alva had happily termed it, "called the Salic law"—prevented from passing quietly to his daughter, as heiress to her mother, daughter of Henry II., he was now fully bent upon making his own without further loss of time. England, in consequence of the mishap of the year eighty-eight, he was inclined to defer appropriating until the possession of the French coasts, together with those of the Netherlands, should enable him to risk the adventure with assured chances of success.

The Netherlands were fast slipping beyond his control, to be sure, as he engaged in these endless schemes; and ill-disposed people of the day said that the king was like Æsop's dog, lapping the river dry in order to get at the skins floating on the surface. The Duke of Parma was driven to his wits' ends for expedients, and beside himself with vexation, when commanded to withdraw his ill-paid and mutinous army from the Provinces for the purpose of invading France.[1] Most

[1] "Con todo, claro es," said Champagny, with bitterness, "que no bastando ya para la guerra que tenemos, mucho menos para si nos engolfamos en la de Francia."—Discours sur les affaires des Pays Bas. (MS. before cited.)

importunate were the appeals and potent the arguments by which he attempted to turn Philip from his purpose. It was in vain. Spain was the great, aggressive, over-shadowing power at that day, before whose plots and whose violence the nations alternately trembled, and it was France that now stood in danger of being conquered or dismembered by the common enemy of all. That unhappy kingdom, torn by intestine conflict, naturally invited the ambition and the greediness of foreign powers. Civil war had been its condition, with brief intervals, for a whole generation of mankind. During the last few years, the sword had been never sheathed, while "the holy Confederacy" and the Béarnese struggled together for the mastery. Religion was the mantle under which the chiefs on both sides concealed their real designs as they led on their followers year after year to the desperate conflict. And their followers, the masses, were doubtless in earnest. A great principle—the relation of man to his Maker and his condition in a future world as laid down by rival priesthoods—has in almost every stage of history had power to influence the multitude to fury and to deluge the world in blood. And so long as the superstitious element of human nature enables individuals or combinations of them to dictate to their fellow-creatures those relations, or to dogmatize concerning those conditions—to take possession of their consciences in short, and to interpose their mummeries between man and his Creator—it is probable that such scenes as caused the nations to shudder throughout so large a portion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries will continue to repeat themselves at intervals in various parts of the earth. Nothing can be more sublime than the self-sacrifice, nothing more demoniac than the crimes, which human creatures have seemed always ready to exhibit under the name of religion.

It was and had been really civil war in France. In the Netherlands it had become essentially a struggle for independence against a foreign monarch; although the germ out of which both conflicts had grown to their enormous proportions was an effort of the multitude to check the growth of

papacy. In France, accordingly, civil war, attended by that gaunt sisterhood, murder, pestilence, and famine, had swept from the soil almost everything that makes life valuable. It had not brought in its train that extraordinary material prosperity and intellectual development at which men wondered in the Netherlands, and to which allusion has just been made. But a fortunate conjunction of circumstances had now placed Henry of Navarre in a position of vantage. He represented the principle of nationality, of French unity. It was impossible to deny that he was in the regular line of succession, now that luckless Henry of Valois slept with his fathers, and the principle of nationality might perhaps prove as vital a force as attachment to the Roman Church. Moreover, the adroit and unscrupulous Béarnese knew well how to shift the mantle of religion from one shoulder to the other, to serve his purposes or the humours of those whom he addressed.

"The King of Spain would exclude me from the kingdom and heritage of my father because of my religion," he said to the Duke of Saxony; "but in that religion *I am determined to persist so long as I shall live.*"[2] The hand was the hand of Henry, but it was the voice of Duplessis Mornay.

"Were there thirty crowns to win," said he, at about the same time to the States of France, "*I would not change my religion on compulsion*, the dagger at my throat. Instruct me, instruct me, *I am not obstinate.*"[3] There spoke the wily free-thinker, determined not to be juggled out of what he considered his property by fanatics or priests of either church. Had Henry been a real devotee, the fate of Christendom might have been different. The world has long known how much misery it is in the power of crowned bigots to inflict.

On the other hand, the Holy League, the sacred Confederacy, was catholic or nothing. Already it was more papist than the pope, and loudly denounced Sixtus V. as a Huguenot because he was thought to entertain a weak admiration both for Henry the heretic and for the Jezebel of England.

[2] Lettre du Roy au Duc de Saxe, dressée par Duplessis. Mem. and Corresp. de Duplessis Mornay, iv. 491.

[3] Lettre du Roy de Navarre aux états de ce royaume. Ibid. 322, *seqq.*

But the holy confederacy was bent on destroying the national government of France, and dismembering the national domain. To do this the pretext of trampling out heresy and indefinitely extending the power of Rome, was most influential with the multitude, and entitled the leaders to enjoy immense power for the time being, while maturing their schemes for acquiring permanent possession of large fragments of the national territory. Mayenne, Nemours, Aumale, Mercœur longed to convert temporary governments into independent principalities. The Duke of Lorraine looked with longing eyes on Verdun, Sedan, and the other fair cities within the territories contiguous to his own domains. The reckless house of Savoy, with whom freebooting and land-robbery seemed geographical and hereditary necessities, was busy on the southern borders, while it seemed easy enough for Philip II., in right of his daughter, to secure at least the duchy of Brittany before entering on the sovereignty of the whole kingdom.

To the eyes of the world at large France might well seem in a condition of hopeless disintegration; the restoration of its unity and former position among the nations, under the government of a single chief, a weak and wicked dream Furious and incessant were the anathemas hurled on the head of the Béarnese for his persistence in drowning the land in blood in the hope of recovering a national capital which never could be his, and of wresting from the control of the confederacy that power which, whether usurped or rightful, was considered, at least by the peaceably inclined, to have become a solid fact.

The poor puppet locked in the tower of Fontenay, and entitled Charles X., deceived and scared no one. Such money as there was might be coined in its name, but Madam League reigned supreme in Paris. The confederates, inspired by the eloquence of a cardinal legate, and supplied with funds by the faithful, were ready to dare a thousand deaths rather than submit to the rule of a tyrant and heretic.

What was an authority derived from the laws of the land and the history of the race compared with the dogmas of Rome and the trained veterans of Spain? It remained to be seen whether nationality or bigotry would triumph. But in the early days of 1590 the prospects of nationality were not encouraging.

François de Luxembourg, duc de Pincey, was in Rome at that moment, deputed by such catholic nobles of France as were friendly to Henry of Navarre.[4] Sixtus might perhaps be influenced as to the degree of respect to be accorded to the envoy's representations by the events of the campaign about to open. Meantime the legate Gaetano, young, rich, eloquent, unscrupulous, distinguished alike for the splendour of his house and the brilliancy of his intellect, had arrived in Paris.[5]

Followed by a great train of adherents he had gone down to the House of Parliament, and was about to seat himself under the dais reserved for the king, when Brisson, first President of Parliament, plucked him back by the arm, and caused him to take a seat immediately below his own.[6]

Deeply was the bold president to expiate this defence of king and law against the Holy League. For the moment however the legate contented himself with a long harangue, setting forth the power of Rome, while Brisson replied by an oration magnifying the grandeur of France.

Soon afterwards the cardinal addressed himself to the counteraction of Henry's projects of conversion. For well did the subtle priest understand that in purging himself of heresy, the Béarnese was about to cut the ground from beneath his enemies' feet. In a letter to the archbishops and bishops of France he argued the matter at length. Especially he denied the necessity or the legality of an assembly of all the prelates of France, such as Henry desired to afford him the requisite "instruction" as to the respective merits of the Roman and the reformed Church. Certainly, he urged,

[4] De Thou, xi. 97, pp. 100–103.
[5] Dondini. De rebus in Gallia gestis ab Alexandro Farnesio, i. 131.
[6] De Thou, *ubi sup.* p. 108.

the Prince of Béarne could hardly require instruction as to the tenets of either, seeing that at different times he had faithfully professed both.[7]

But while benches of bishops and doctors of the Sorbonne were burnishing all the arms in ecclesiastical and legal arsenals for the approaching fray, the sound of louder if not more potent artillery began to be heard in the vicinity of Paris. The candid Henry, while seeking ghostly instruction with eagerness from his papistical patrons, was equally persevering in applying for the assistance of heretic musketeers and riders from his protestant friends in England, Holland, Germany, and Switzerland.

Queen Elizabeth and the States-General vied with each other in generosity to the great champion of protestantism, who was combating the holy league so valiantly, and rarely has a great historical figure presented itself to the world so bizarre of aspect, and under such shifting perplexity of light and shade, as did the Béarnese in the early spring of 1590.

The hope of a considerable portion of the catholic nobility of his realm, although himself an excommunicated heretic; the mainstay of Calvinism while secretly bending all his energies to effect his reconciliation with the pope; the idol of the austere and grimly puritanical, while himself a model of profligacy; the leader of the earnest and the true, although false as water himself in every relation in which human beings can stand to each other; a standard-bearer of both great branches of the Christian Church in an age when religion was the atmosphere of men's daily lives, yet, finding his sincerest admirer, and one of his most faithful allies, in the Grand Turk,[8] the representative of

[7] De Thou, *ubi sup.* p. 108.

[8] A portion of the magnificently protective letter of Sultan Amurath, in which he complimented Henry on his religious stedfastness, might almost have made the king's cheek tingle.

" . . . " a toi, Henri de Navarre de la race invincible des Bourbons, nous avons entendu que Don Philippe, de la maison d'Autriche, favorisant aucuns de tes ennemis, tache de te priver de la succession légitime qui t'appartient au royaume de France qui est de notre alliance et confédération en haine de ce *que tu detestes les faux services des idoles, tres déplaisantes au grand Dieu, pour tenir purement ce que tu tiens qui est le meilleur du*

national liberty and human rights against regal and sacerdotal absolutism, while himself a remorseless despot by nature and education, and a believer in no rights of the people save in their privilege to be ruled by himself, it seems strange at first view that Henry of Navarre should have been for centuries so heroic and popular an image. But he was a soldier, a wit, a consummate politician; above all, he was a man, at a period when to be a king was often to be something much less or much worse.

To those accustomed to weigh and analyse popular forces it might well seem that he was now playing an utterly hopeless game. His capital garrisoned by the Pope and the King of Spain, with its grandees and its populace scoffing at his pretence of authority and loathing his name; with an exchequer consisting of what he could beg or borrow from Queen Elizabeth—most parsimonious of sovereigns reigning over the half of a small island—and from the States-General governing a half-born, half-drowned little republic, engaged in a quarter of a century's warfare with the greatest monarch in the world; with a wardrobe consisting of a dozen shirts and five pocket-handkerchiefs,[9] most of them ragged, and with a commissariat made up of what could be brought in the saddle-bags of his Huguenot cavaliers who came to the charge with him to-day, and to-morrow were dispersed again to their mountain fastnesses; it did not seem likely on any reasonable theory of dynamics that the power of the Béarnese was capable of outweighing Pope and Spain, and the meaner but massive populace of France, and the Sorbonne, and the great chiefs of the confederacy, wealthy, long descended, allied to all the sovereigns of Christendom, potent in territorial possessions and skilful in wielding political influences.

monde; je te fais assavoir qu'ayant en horreur cette cause qui ne tend qu'au profit particulier de ceux qui se sont élevés contre toi, je veux prendre ta protection et tellement dompter la folie de tes ennemis et de l'Espagnol qui t'occupe injustement le royaume de Navarre, qu'il en sera mémoire à jamais, et te rendant victorieux, je veux te rétablir avec ma puissance redoutable par tout le monde au grand épouvantement de tous les roys, ayant moyen de les réduire en telle extrémité qu'ils ne te feront jamais ennui." Arch. de Simancas (Paris) B. 64[IV]. Cited by Capefigue, Hist. de la Réforme, de la Ligue et du règne de Henri IV. v. 361.

[9] L'Estoile, p. 203.

"The Béarnese is poor but a gentleman of good family,"[10] said the cheerful Henry, and it remained to be seen whether nationality, unity, legitimate authority, history, and law would be able to neutralise the powerful combination of opposing elements.

The king had been besieging Dreux and had made good progress in reducing the outposts of the city. As it was known that he was expecting considerable reinforcements of English ships, Netherlanders, and Germans, the chiefs of the league issued orders from Paris for an attack before he should thus be strengthened.

For Parma, unwillingly obeying the stringent commands of his master, had sent from Flanders eighteen hundred picked cavalry under Count Philip Egmont to join the army of Mayenne. This force comprised five hundred Belgian heavy dragoons under the chief nobles of the land, together with a selection, in even proportions, of Walloon, German, Spanish, and Italian troopers.

Mayenne accordingly crossed the Seine at Mantes with an army of ten thousand foot, and, including Egmont's contingent, about four thousand horse. A force under Marshal d'Aumont, which lay in Ivry at the passage of the Eure, fell back on his approach and joined the remainder of the king's army. The siege of Dreux was abandoned, and Henry withdrew to the neighbourhood of Nonancourt. It was obvious that the duke meant to offer battle, and it was rare that the king under any circumstances could be induced to decline a combat.[11]

On the night of the 12th-13th March, Henry occupied Saint André, a village situated on an elevated and extensive plain four leagues from Nonancourt, in the direction of Ivry, fringed on three sides by villages and by a wood, and commanding a view of all the approaches from the country between the Seine and Eure. It would have been better had Mayenne been beforehand with him, as the sequel proved;

[10] L'Estoile, p. 203.

[11] De Thou, t. xi. lib. 97, pp. 116, *seqq.* Coloma, Guerras de los Estados Baxos, iii. 43, *seqq.* Parma to Philip, 24 March, 1590, (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

but the duke was not famed for the rapidity of his movements. During the greater part of the night, Henry was employed in distributing his orders for that conflict which was inevitable on the following day. His army was drawn up according to a plan prepared by himself, and submitted to the most experienced of his generals for their approval. He then personally visited every portion of the encampment, speaking words of encouragement to his soldiers, and perfecting his arrangements for the coming conflict. Attended by Marshals d'Aumont and Biron he remained on horseback during a portion of the night, having ordered his officers to their tents and reconnoitred as well as he could the position of the enemy. Towards morning he retired to his headquarters at Fourainville, where he threw himself half-dressed on his truckle bed, and although the night was bitterly cold, with no covering but his cloak. He was startled from his slumber before the dawn by a movement of lights in the enemy's camp, and he sprang to his feet supposing that the duke was stealing a march upon him despite all his precautions. The alarm proved to be a false one, but Henry lost no time in ordering his battle. His cavalry he divided in seven troops or squadrons. The first, forming the left wing, was a body of three hundred under Marshal d'Aumont, supported by two regiments of French infantry. Next, separated by a short interval, was another troop of three hundred under the Duke of Montpensier, supported by two other regiments of foot, one Swiss and one German. In front of Montpensier was Baron Biron the younger, at the head of still another body of three hundred. Two troops of cuirassiers, each four hundred strong, were on Biron's left, the one commanded by the Grand Prior of France, Charles d'Angoulême, the other by Monsieur de Givry. Between the Prior and Givry were six pieces of heavy artillery, while the battalia, formed of eight hundred horse in six squadrons, was commanded by the king in person, and covered on both sides by English and Swiss infantry, amounting to some four thousand in all. The right wing was under the charge of old Marshal Biron, and comprised three

troops of horse, numbering one hundred and fifty each, two companies of German riders, and four regiments of French infantry. These numbers, which are probably given with as much accuracy as can be obtained, show a force of about three thousand horse and twelve thousand foot.

The Duke of Mayenne, seeing too late the advantage of position which he might have easily secured the day before, led his army forth with the early light, and arranged it in an order not very different from that adopted by the king, and within cannon-shot of his lines. The right wing under Marshal de la Châtre consisted of three regiments of French and one of Germans, supporting three regiments of Spanish lancers, two cornets of German riders under the Bastard of Brunswick, and four hundred cuirassiers. The battalia, which was composed of six hundred splendid cavalry, all noblemen of France, guarding the white banner of the Holy League, and supported by a column of three thousand Swiss and two thousand French infantry, was commanded by Mayenne in person, assisted by his half-brother, the Duke of Nemours. In front of the infantry was a battery of six cannon and three culverines. The left wing was commanded by Marshal de Rêne, with six regiments of French and Lorrainers, two thousand Germans, six hundred French cuirassiers, and the mounted troopers of Count Egmont. It is probable that Mayenne's whole force, therefore, amounted to nearly four thousand cavalry and at least thirteen thousand foot.[12]

Very different was the respective appearance of the two armies, so far, especially, as regarded the horsemen on both sides. Gay in their gilded armour and waving plumes, with silken scarves across their shoulders, and the fluttering favours of fair ladies on their arms or in their helmets, the brilliant champions of the Holy Catholic Confederacy clustered around the chieftains of the great house of Guise, impatient for the conflict. It was like a muster for a brilliant and chivalrous tournament. The Walloon and Flemish

[12] De Thou, Coloma, *ubi sup.* Dondini, i. 140, *seqq.* Meteren, xvi. 292. Parma's letters before cited.

nobles, outrivalling even the self-confidence of their companions in arms, taunted them with their slowness. The impetuous Egmont, burning to eclipse the fame of his ill-fated father at Gravelines and St. Quintin in the same holy cause, urged on the battle with unseemly haste, loudly proclaiming that if the French were faint-hearted he would himself give a good account of the Navarrese prince without any assistance from them.

A cannon-shot away, the grim puritan nobles who had come forth from their mountain fastnesses to do battle for king and law and for the rights of conscience against the Holy League —men seasoned in a hundred battle-fields, clad all in iron, with no dainty ornaments nor holiday luxury of warfare—knelt on the ground, smiting their mailed breasts with iron hands, invoking blessings on themselves and curses and confusion on their enemies in the coming conflict, and chanting a stern psalm of homage to the God of battles and of wrath. And Henry of France and Navarre, descendant of Lewis the Holy and of Hugh the Great, beloved chief of the Calvinist cavaliers, knelt among his heretic brethren, and prayed and chanted with them. But not the staunchest Huguenot of them all, not Duplessis, nor D'Aubigné, nor De la Noue with the iron arm, was more devoted on that day to crown and country than were such papist supporters of the rightful heir as had sworn to conquer the insolent foreigner on the soil of France or die.

When this brief prelude was over, Henry made an address to his soldiers, but its language has not been preserved. It is known, however, that he wore that day his famous snow-white plume, and that he ordered his soldiers, should his banner go down in the conflict, to follow wherever and as long as that plume should be seen waving on any part of the field. He had taken a position by which his troops had the sun and wind in their backs, so that the smoke rolled toward the enemy and the light shone in their eyes. The combat began with the play of artillery, which soon became so warm that

[13] De Thou, *ubi sup.*

Egmont, whose cavalry—suffering and galled—soon became impatient, ordered a charge. It was a most brilliant one. The heavy troopers of Flanders and Hainault, following their spirited chieftain, dashed upon old Marshal Biron, routing his cavalry, charging clean up to the Huguenot guns and sabring the cannoneers. The shock was square, solid, irresistible, and was followed up by the German riders under Eric of Brunswick, who charged upon the battalia of the royal army, where the king commanded in person.

There was a panic. The whole royal cavalry wavered, the supporting infantry recoiled, the day seemed lost before the battle was well begun. Yells of "Victory! Victory! up with the Holy League, down with the heretic Béarnese," resounded through the Catholic squadrons. The king and Marshal Biron, who were near each other, were furious with rage, but already doubtful of the result. They exerted themselves to rally the troops under their immediate command, and to reform the shattered ranks.[14]

The German riders and French lancers under Brunswick and Bassompierre had, however, not done their work as thoroughly as Egmont had done. The ground was so miry and soft that in the brief space which separated the hostile lines they had not power to urge their horses to full speed. Throwing away their useless lances, they came on at a feeble canter, sword in hand, and were unable to make a very vigorous impression on the more heavily armed troopers opposed to them. Meeting with a firm resistance to their career, they wheeled, faltered a little and fell a short distance back.[15] Many of the riders being of the reformed

[14] De Thou, Dondini, Coloma, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[15] William Lyly to Sir F. Walsingham, 20 March, 1590, (S. P. Office MS.), a blunt, plain-spoken Englishman and eye-witness, writing from the spot. Mémoires de Sully, ed. Londres, 1747, iii. L. 168, 169. The Duc de Sully, who fought in the squadron which sustained Egmont's first onset, and who received seven wounds, states expressly that the king would have been hopelessly defeated, had the whole army of the League displayed the same remarkable valour as was manifested by Egmont's command. The right of the royal cavalry broke into a panic flight, after the hand to hand combat had lasted a quarter of an hour, and the left was broken and thrown into utter confusion

religion, refused moreover to fire upon the Huguenots, and discharged their carbines in the air.[16]

The king, whose glance on the battle-field was like inspiration, saw the blot and charged upon them in person with his whole battalia of cavalry. The veteran Biron followed hard upon the snow-white plume. The scene was changed, victory succeeded to impending defeat, and the enemy was routed. The riders and cuirassiers, broken into a struggling heap of confusion, strewed the ground with their dead bodies, or carried dismay into the ranks of the infantry as they strove to escape. Brunswick went down in the *mêlée*, mortally wounded as it was believed. Egmont renewing the charge at the head of his victorious Belgian troopers, fell dead with a musket-ball through his heart. The shattered German and Walloon cavalry, now pricked forward by the lances of their companions, under the passionate commands of Mayenne and Aumale, now falling back before the furious charges of the Huguenots, were completely overthrown and cut to pieces. Seven times did Henry of Navarre in person lead his troopers to the charge ; but suddenly, in the midst of the din of battle and the cheers of victory, a message of despair went from lip to lip throughout the royal lines. The king had disappeared. He was killed, and the hopes of Protestantism and of France were fallen for ever with him. The white standard of his battalia had been seen floating wildly and purposelessly over the field ; for his bannerman, Pot de Rhodes, a young noble of Dauphiny, wounded mortally in the head, with blood streaming over his face and blinding his sight, was utterly unable to control his horse, who gallopped hither and thither at his own caprice, misleading many troopers who followed in his erratic career. A cavalier, armed in proof, and wearing the famous snow-white plume, after a hand-to-hand struggle with a veteran of Count Bossu's regiment, was seen to fall dead by the side of the bannerman. The Fleming, not used to boast, loudly asserted that he had slain the Béarnese, and the news spread rapidly over the battle-field. The defeated

[16] Sully, *ubi sup.*

Confederates gained new courage, the victorious Royalists were beginning to waver, when suddenly, between the hostile lines, in the very midst of the battle, the king galloped forward, bareheaded, covered with blood and dust, but entirely unhurt. A wild shout of "*Vive le Roi!*" rang through the air. Cheerful as ever, he addressed a few encouraging words to his soldiers, with a smiling face, and again led a charge. It was all that was necessary to complete the victory. The enemy broke and ran away on every side in wildest confusion, followed by the royalist cavalry, who sabred them as they fled. The panic gained the foot-soldiers, who should have supported the cavalry, but had not been at all engaged in the action. The French infantry threw away their arms as they rushed from the field and sought refuge in the woods. The Walloons were so expeditious in the race, that they never stopped till they gained their own frontier.[17] The day was hopelessly lost, and although Mayenne had conducted himself well in the early part of the day, it was certain that he was excelled by none in the celerity of his flight when the rout had fairly begun. Pausing to draw breath as he gained the wood, he was seen to deal blows with his own sword among the mob of fugitives, not that he might rally them to their flag and drive them back to another encounter, but because they encumbered his own retreat.[18]

The Walloon carbineers, the German riders, and the French lancers, disputing as to the relative blame to be attached to each corps, began shooting and sabring each other, almost before they were out of the enemy's sight. Many were thus killed. The lansquenets were all put to the sword. The Swiss infantry were allowed to depart for their own country on pledging themselves not again to bear arms against Henry IV.

[17] Lyly's letter before cited. Compare Coloma, Dondini, De Thou, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[18] Decorous chroniclers like Dondini (i. 143) and others, represent the duke as vigorously rallying and rebuking the fugitives; but, says honest William Lyly, telling what he saw: "The enemy thus ran away, Mayenne to Ivry, where the Walloons and Reiters followed so fast, that there standing, hasting to draw breath, and not able to speak, he was constrained to draw his sword to strike the flyers to make place for his own flight." (MS. letter before cited.)

It is probable that eight hundred of the leaguers were either killed on the battle-field or drowned in the swollen river in their retreat. About one-fourth of that number fell in the army of the king. It is certain that of the contingent from the obedient Netherlands, two hundred and seventy, including their distinguished general, lost their lives.[19] The Bastard of Brunswick, crawling from beneath a heap of slain, escaped with life.[20] Mayenne lost all his standards and all the baggage of his army, while the army itself was for a time hopelessly dissolved.[21]

Few cavalry actions have attained a wider celebrity in history than the fight of Ivry. Yet there have been many hard-fought battles, where the struggle was fiercer and closer, where the issue was for a longer time doubtful, where far more lives on either side were lost, where the final victory was immediately productive of very much greater results, and which, nevertheless, have sunk into hopeless oblivion. The personal details which remain concerning the part enacted by the adventurous king at this most critical period of his career, the romantic interest which must always gather about that ready-witted, ready-sworded Gascon, at the moment when, to contemporaries, the result of all his struggles seemed so hopeless or at best so doubtful; above all, the numerous royal and princely names which embellished the roll-call of that famous passage of arms, and which were supposed, in those days at least, to add such lustre to a battle-field, as humbler names, however illustrious by valour or virtue, could never bestow, have made this combat for ever famous.

Yet it is certain that the most healthy moral, in military affairs, to be derived from the event, is that the importance of a victory depends less upon itself than on the use to be made of it. Mayenne fled to Mantes, the Duke of Nemours to Chartres, other leaders of the League in various directions. Mayenne told every body he met that the Béarnese was

[19] De Thou says eight hundred, Dondini four hundred, but Farnese in his letter to the king says two hundred and seventy.

[20] So says Dondini, i. 149. Coloma says he was killed.

[21] Dondini, De Thou, Coloma, Meteren, Parma's letters, Lyly's letter,

killed, and that although his own army was defeated, he should soon have another one on foot. The same intelligence was communicated to the Duke of Parma, and by him to Philip. Mendoza and the other Spanish agents went about Paris spreading the news of Henry's death, but the fact seemed woefully to lack confirmation, while the proofs of the utter overthrow and shameful defeat of the Leaguers were visible on every side. The Parisians—many of whom the year before had in vain hired windows in the principal streets, in order to witness the promised entrance of the Béarnese, bound hand and foot, and with a gag in his mouth,[22] to swell the triumph of Madam League—were incredulous as to the death now reported to them of this very lively heretic, by those who had fled so ignominiously from his troopers.

De la Noue and the other Huguenot chieftains earnestly urged upon Henry the importance of advancing upon Paris without an instant's delay, and it seems at least extremely probable that, had he done so, the capital would have fallen at once into his hands. It is the concurrent testimony of contemporaries that the panic, the destitution, the confusion would have made resistance impossible had a determined onslaught been made.[23] And Henry had a couple of thousand horsemen flushed with victory, and a dozen thousand foot who had been compelled to look upon a triumph in which they had no opportunity of sharing. Success and emulation would have easily triumphed over dissension and despair.

But the king, yielding to the councils of Biron and other catholics, declined attacking the capital, and preferred waiting the slow, and in his circumstances eminently hazardous, operations of a regular siege. Was it the fear of giving a signal triumph to the cause of protestantism that caused the Huguenot leader—so soon to become a renegade—to pause in his career? Was it anxiety lest his victorious

[22] L'Estoile Reg. Journal de Henri IV. p. 6.
[23] Dondini, Coloma, *ubi sup.* Compare De Thou, Meteren, Sully, *et mult. al.*

entrance into Paris might undo the diplomacy of his catholic envoys at Rome ? or was it simply the mutinous condition of his army, especially of the Swiss mercenaries, who refused to advance a step unless their arrears of pay were at once furnished them out of the utterly empty exchequer of the king ?[24] Whatever may have been the cause of the delay, it is certain that the golden fruit of victory was not plucked, and that although the confederate army had rapidly dissolved, in consequence of their defeat, the king's own forces manifested as little cohesion.

And now began that slow and painful siege, the details of which are as terrible, but as universally known, as those of any chapters in the blood-stained history of the century. Henry seized upon the towns guarding the rivers Seine and Marne, twin nurses of Paris. By controlling the course of those streams as well as that of the Yonne and Oise—especially by taking firm possession of Lagny on the Marne, whence a bridge led from the Isle of France to the Brie country—great thoroughfare of wine and corn—and of Corbeil at the junction of the little river Essonne with the Seine—it was easy in that age to stop the vital circulation of the imperial city.

By midsummer, Paris, unquestionably the first city of Europe at that day,[25] was in extremities, and there are few events in history in which our admiration is more excited by the power of mankind to endure almost preternatural misery, or our indignation more deeply aroused by the cruelty with which the sublimest principles of human nature may be made to serve the purposes of selfish ambition and grovelling superstition, than this famous leaguer.

Rarely have men at any epoch defended their fatherland against foreign oppression with more heroism than that which was manifested by the Parisians of 1590 in resisting religious toleration, and in obeying a foreign and priestly despotism. Men, women, and children cheerfully laid down their lives by

[24] Mémoires de Sully, lib. iv. 177, *seqq.*

[25] "Aquella vasta ciudad, sin disputa la mayor de Europa," says Coloma, iii. 45.

thousands in order that the papal legate and the king of Spain might trample upon that legitimate sovereign of France who was one day to become the idol of Paris and of the whole kingdom.

A census taken at the beginning of the siege had showed a populace of two hundred thousand souls, with a sufficiency of provisions, it was thought, to last one month.[26] But before the terrible summer was over—so completely had the city been invested—the bushel of wheat was worth three hundred and sixty crowns, rye and oats being but little cheaper.[27] Indeed, grain might as well have cost three thousand crowns the bushel, for the prices recorded placed it beyond the reach of all but the extremely wealthy. The flesh of horses, asses, dogs, cats, rats had become rare luxuries. There was nothing cheap, said a citizen bitterly, but sermons.[28] And the priests and monks of every order went daily about the streets, preaching fortitude in that great resistance to heresy, by which Paris was earning for itself a crown of glory, and promising the most direct passage to paradise for the souls of the wretched victims who fell daily, starved to death, upon the pavements. And the monks and priests did their work nobly, aiding the general resolution by the example of their own courage. Better fed than their fellow citizens, they did military work in trench, guard-house and rampart, as the population became rapidly unfit, from physical exhaustion, for the defence of the city.

The young Duke of Nemours, governor of the place, manifested as much resolution and conduct in bringing his countrymen to perdition as if the work in which he was engaged had been the highest and holiest that ever tasked human energies. He was sustained in his task by that proud princess, his own and Mayenne's mother, by Madame Montpensier, by the resident triumvirate of Spain, Mendoza,

[26] De Thou, t. xi. lib. 97, 162.

[27] Bor, III. xviii. 535.

[28] L'Estoile, 23 — "Tout ce qui estoit bon marché a Paris étoient les sermons où on repaissoit le pauvre monde affamé de vent, c'est à dire de menteries . . . persuadant qu'il valoit mieux tuer ses propres enfants, n'ayant de quoi leur donner à manger, que de recevoir et reconnoître un roy héréticque," &c.

Commander Moreo, and John Baptist Tassis, by the cardinal legate Gaetano, and, more than all, by the sixteen chiefs of the wards, those municipal tyrants of the unhappy populace.[29]

Pope Sixtus himself was by no means eager for the success of the League. After the battle of Ivry, he had most seriously inclined his ear to the representations of Henry's envoy, and showed much willingness to admit the victorious heretic once more into the bosom of the Church. Sixtus was not desirous of contributing to the advancement of Philip's power. He feared his designs on Italy, being himself most anxious at that time to annex Naples to the holy see. He had amassed a large treasure, but he liked best to spend it in splendid architecture, in noble fountains, in magnificent collections of art, science, and literature, and, above all, in building up fortunes for the children of his sister the washerwoman, and in allying them all to the most princely houses of Italy, while never allowing them even to mention the name of their father, so base was his degree; but he cared not to disburse from his hoarded dollars to supply the necessities of the League.[30]

But Gaetano, although he could wring but fifty thousand crowns from his Holiness after the fatal fight of Ivry, to further the good cause, was lavish in expenditures from his own purse and from other sources, and this too at a time when thirty-three per cent. interest was paid to the usurers of Antwerp for one month's loan of ready money.[31] He was indefatigable, too, and most successful in his exhortations and ghostly consolations to the people. Those proud priests and great nobles were playing a reckless game, and the hopes of mankind beyond the grave were the counters on their table. For themselves there were rich prizes for the winning. Should they succeed in dismembering the fair land where they were enacting their fantastic parts, there were temporal principalities, great provinces, petty sovereignties, to be carved out

[29] L'Estoile, 23, *seqq.* De Thou, *ubi sup.*, 162, *seqq.* Bor, *ubi sup.*
[30] De Thou, lib. 97. [31] Meteren, xvi. 293.

of the heritage which the Béarnese claimed for his own. Obviously then, their consciences could never permit this shameless heretic, by a simulated conversion at the critical moment, to block their game and restore the national unity and laws. And even should it be necessary to give the whole kingdom, instead of the mere duchy of Brittany, to Philip of Spain, still there were mighty guerdons to be bestowed on his supporters before the foreign monarch could seat himself on the throne of Henry's ancestors.

As to the people who were fighting, starving, dying by thousands in this great cause, there were eternal rewards in another world profusely promised for their heroism instead of the more substantial bread and beef, for lack of which they were laying down their lives.

It was estimated that before July twelve thousand human beings in Paris had died, for want of food, within three months. But as there were no signs of the promised relief by the army of Parma and Mayenne, and as the starving people at times appeared faint-hearted, their courage was strengthened one day by a stirring exhibition.

An astonishing procession marched through the streets of the city, led by the Bishop of Senlis and the Prior of Chartreux, each holding a halberd in one hand and a crucifix in the other, and graced by the presence of the cardinal-legate, and of many prelates from Italy. A lame monk, adroitly manipulating the staff of a drum major, went hopping and limping before them, much to the amazement of the crowd. Then came a long file of monks—Capuchins, Bernardists, Minimes, Franciscans, Jacobins, Carmelites, and other orders—each with his cowl thrown back, his long robes trussed up, a helmet on his head, a cuirass on his breast, and a halberd in his hand. The elder ones marched first, grinding their teeth, rolling their eyes, and making other ferocious demonstrations. Then came the younger friars, similarly attired, all armed with arquebusses, which they occasionally and accidentally discharged to the disadvantage of the spectators, several of whom were killed or wounded on the spot. Among others a

servant of Cardinal Gaetano was thus slain, and the event caused much commotion, until the cardinal proclaimed that a man thus killed in so holy a cause had gone straight to heaven and had taken his place among the just. It was impossible, thus argued the people in their simplicity, that so wise and virtuous a man as the cardinal should not know what was best.

The procession marched to the church of our Lady of Loretto, where they solemnly promised to the blessed Virgin a lamp and ship of gold—should she be willing to use her influence in behalf of the suffering city—to be placed on her shrine as soon as the siege should be raised.[32]

But these demonstrations, however cheering to the souls, had comparatively little effect upon the bodies of the sufferers. It was impossible to walk through the streets of Paris without stumbling over the dead bodies of the citizens. Trustworthy eye-witnesses of those dreadful days have placed the number of the dead during the summer at thirty thousand.[33] A tumultuous assemblage of the starving and the forlorn rushed at last to the municipal palace, demanding peace or bread. The rebels were soon dispersed however by a charge, headed by the Chevalier d'Aumale, and assisted by the chiefs of the wards, and so soon as the riot was quelled, its ringleader, a leading advocate, Renaud by name, was hanged.[34]

Still, but for the energy of the priests, it is doubtful whether the city could have been held by the Confederacy. The Duke of Nemours confessed that there were occasions when they never would have been able to sustain a determined onslaught, and they were daily expecting to see the Prince of Béarne battering triumphantly at their gates. But the eloquence of the preachers, especially of the one-eyed father Boucher, sustained the fainting spirits of the people, and consoled the sufferers in their dying agonies by glimpses of paradise. Sublime was that devotion, superhuman that craft, but it is only by weapons from the armoury

[32] De Thou, t. xi. lib. 97, p. 161. Herrera, P. iii. lib. v. cl. 210.
[33] L'Estoile, p. 25. Herrera says 50,000, *loc. cit.* [34] De Thou, *ubi sup.* 177.

of the Unseen that human creatures can long confront such horrors in a wicked cause. Superstition, in those days at least, was a political force absolutely without limitation, and most adroitly did the agents of Spain and Rome handle its tremendous enginry against unhappy France. For the hideous details of the most dreadful sieges recorded in ancient or modern times were now reproduced in Paris. Not a revolutionary circumstance, at which the world had shuddered in the accounts of the siege of Jerusalem, was spared. Men devoured such dead vermin as could be found lying in the streets. They crowded greedily around stalls in the public squares where the skin, bones, and offal of such dogs, cats and unclean beasts as still remained for the consumption of the wealthier classes were sold to the populace. Over the doorways of these flesh markets might be read "*Haec sunt munera pro iis qui vitam pro Philippo profuderunt.*"[35] Men stood in archways and narrow passages lying in wait for whatever stray dogs still remained at large, noosed them, strangled them, and like savage beasts of prey tore them to pieces and devoured them alive.[36] And it sometimes happened, too, that the equally hungry dog proved the more successful in the foul encounter, and fed upon the man. A lady visiting the Duchess of Nemours—called for the high pretensions of her sons by her two marriages the queen-mother—complained bitterly that mothers in Paris had been compelled to kill their own children outright to save them from starving to death in lingering agony. "And if you are brought to that extremity," replied the duchess, "as for the sake of our holy religion to be forced to kill your own children, do you think that so great a matter after all? What are your children made of more than other people's children? What are we all but dirt and dust?"[37] Such was the consolation administered by the mother of the man who governed Paris, and defended its gates against its lawful sovereign at the command of a foreigner; while the priests in

[35] L'Estoile, 27. "De ce que j'écris," adds the journalist, "mes yeux ont veu une bonne partie." [36] De Thou, *ubi sup.* 177. [37] L'Estoile, 29.

their turn persuaded the populace that it was far more righteous to kill their own children, if they had no food to give them, than to obtain food by recognising a heretic king.[38]

It was related too, and believed, that in some instances mothers had salted the bodies of their dead children and fed upon them, day by day, until the hideous repast would no longer support their own life. They died, and the secret was revealed by servants who had partaken of the food.[39] The Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, advised recourse to an article of diet which had been used in some of the oriental sieges. The counsel at first was rejected as coming from the agent of Spain, who wished at all hazards to save the capital of France from falling out of the hands of his master into those of the heretic. But dire necessity prevailed, and the bones of the dead were taken in considerable quantities from the cemeteries, ground into flour, baked into bread, and consumed. It was called Madame Montpensier's cake, because the duchess earnestly proclaimed its merits to the poor Parisians. "She was never known to taste it herself, however," bitterly observed one who lived in Paris through that horrible summer. She was right to abstain, for all who ate of it died, and the Montpensier flour fell into disuse.[40]

Lansquenets and other soldiers, mad with hunger and rage, when they could no longer find dogs to feed on, chased children through the streets, and were known in several instances to kill and devour them on the spot.[41] To those expressing horror at the perpetration of such a crime, a leading personage, member of the Council of Nine, maintained that there was less danger to one's soul in satisfying one's hunger with a dead child, in case of necessity, than in recognising the heretic Béarnese, and he added that all the best theologians and doctors of Paris were of his opinion.[42]

[38] L'Estoile, 23.
[39] Ibid. 25.
[40] Ibid. De Thou, *ubi sup.* 177.
[41] L'Estoile, 30.
[42] Ibid. "Lansquenets, gens de soi barbares et inhumains, mourans de male rage et faim, commencèrent à chasser aux enfans comme aux chiens, et en mangerent trois, deux à l'hostel Saint Denis et un à l'hôtel de Palaiseau, et fut commis ce cruel et bar-

As the summer wore on to its close, through all these horrors, and as there were still no signs of Mayenne and Parma leading their armies to the relief of the city, it became necessary to deceive the people by a show of negotiation with the beleaguering army. Accordingly, the Spanish ambassador, the legate, and the other chiefs of the Holy League appointed a deputation, consisting of the Cardinal Gondy, the Archbishop of Lyons, and the Abbé d'Elbéne, to Henry.[43] It soon became evident to the king, however, that these commissioners were but trifling with him in order to amuse the populace. His attitude was dignified and determined throughout the interview. The place appointed was St. Anthony's Abbey, before the gates of Paris. Henry wore a cloak and the order of the Holy Ghost, and was surrounded by his council, the princes of the blood, and by more than four hundred of the chief gentlemen of his army. After passing the barricade, the deputies were received by old Marshal Biron, and conducted by him to the king's chamber of state. When they had made their salutations, the king led the way to an inner cabinet, but his progress was much impeded by the crowding of the nobles about him. Wishing to excuse this apparent rudeness, he said to the envoys: "Gentlemen, these men thrust me on as fast to the battle against the foreigner as they now do to my cabinet. Therefore bear with them." Then turning to the crowd, he said: "Room, gentlemen, for the love of me," upon which they all retired.[44]

The deputies then stated that they had been sent by the authorities of Paris to consult as to the means of obtaining a general peace in France. They expressed the hope that the

bare acte dans l'enceinte des murailles de Paris, tant l'ire de Dieu estoit embrassée sur nos testes. Ce qui tenant du commencement pour une fable pour ce que me sembloit que *hoc erat atrocius vero*, j'ai trouvé depuis que c'estoit verité, confessé et temoigné par les propres bouches des lansquenets. De moi j'ai ouï tenir ceste proposition à un grand Catholique de Paris qui estoit du Conseil des Neuf qu'il y avoit moins de danger de s'accomoder d'un enfant mort en telle nécessité que de reconnoître le Béarnais, estant héréticque comme il estoit, et que de son opinion estoient tous les meilleurs théologiens et docteurs de Paris." Compare Meteren, xvi. 293, who relates that eighteen children were said to have been eaten.

[43] De Thou, *ubi sup.*

[44] W. Lyly to Sir E. Stafford, $\frac{29 \text{ July}}{8 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

king's disposition was favourable to this end, and that he would likewise permit them to confer with the Duke of Mayenne. This manner of addressing him excited his choler. He told Cardinal Gondy, who was spokesman of the deputation, that he had long since answered such propositions. He alone could deal with his subjects. He was like the woman before Solomon; he would have all the child or none of it.[45] Rather than dismember his kingdom he would lose the whole. He asked them what they considered him to be. They answered that they knew his rights, but that the Parisians had different opinions. If Paris would only acknowledge him to be king there could be no more question of war. He asked them if they desired the King of Spain or the Duke of Mayenne for their king, and bade them look well to themselves. The King of Spain could not help them, for he had too much business on hand; while Mayenne had neither means nor courage, having been within three leagues of them for three weeks doing nothing. Neither king nor duke should have that which belonged to him, of that they might be assured.[46] He told them he loved Paris as his capital, as his eldest daughter. If the Parisians wished to see the end of their miseries it was to him they should appeal, not to the Spaniard nor to the Duke of Mayenne. By the grace of God and the swords of his brave gentlemen he would prevent the King of Spain from making a colony of France as he had done of Brazil. He told the commissioners that they ought to die of shame that they, born Frenchmen, should have so forgotten their love of country and of liberty as thus to bow the head to the Spaniard, and—while famine was carrying off thousands of their countrymen before their eyes—to be so cowardly as not to utter one word for the public welfare from fear of offending Cardinal Gaetano, Mendoza, and Moreo.[47] He said that he longed for a combat to decide the issue, and that he had charged Count de Brissac to tell Mayenne that he would give a finger of his right hand for a battle, and two for a

[45] W. Lyly to Sir E. Stafford, $\frac{29 \text{ July}}{8 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

[46] Ibid. Compare De Thou, xi. 97.

[47] De Thou, *ubi sup.*

general peace.[48] He knew and pitied the sufferings of Paris, but the horrors now raging there were to please the King of Spain. That monarch had told the Duke of Parma to trouble himself but little about the Netherlands so long as he could preserve for him his city of Paris. But it was to lean on a broken reed to expect support from this old, decrepit king, whose object was to dismember the flourishing kingdom of France, and to divide it among as many tyrants as he had sent viceroys to the Indies.[49] The crown was his own birthright. Were it elective he should receive the suffrages of the great mass of the electors. He hoped soon to drive those red-crossed foreigners out of his kingdom. Should he fail, they would end by expelling the Duke of Mayenne and all the rest who had called them in, and Paris would become the theatre of the bloodiest tragedy ever yet enacted.[50] The king then ordered Sir Roger Williams to see that a collation was prepared for the deputies, and the veteran Welshman took occasion to indulge in much blunt conversation with the guests. He informed them that he, Mr. Sackville, and many other strangers were serving the king from the hatred they bore the Spaniards and Mother League, and that his royal mistress had always 8000 Englishmen ready to maintain the cause.

While the conferences were going on, the officers and soldiers of the besieging army thronged to the gate, and had much talk with the townsmen. Among others, time-honoured La Noue with the iron arm stood near the gate and harangued the Parisians. "We are here," said he, "five thousand gentlemen; we desire your good, not your ruin. We will make you rich: let us participate in your labour and industry. Undo not yourselves to serve the ambition of a few men." The townspeople hearing the old warrior discoursing thus earnestly, asked who he was. When informed that it was La Noue they cheered him vociferously, and applauded his speech with the greatest vehemence.[51] Yet La Noue was the foremost Huguenot that the sun shone upon, and the Parisians were starving themselves to death out of

[48] De Thou, *ubi sup.* [49] Ibid. [50] Ibid. [51] Lyly's letter before cited.

hatred to heresy. After the collation the commissioners were permitted to go from the camp in order to consult Mayenne.

Such then was the condition of Paris during that memorable summer of tortures. What now were its hopes of deliverance out of this Gehenna? The trust of Frenchmen was in Philip of Spain, whose legions, under command of the great Italian chieftain, were daily longed for to save them from rendering obedience to their lawful prince.

For even the king of straw—the imprisoned cardinal—was now dead, and there was not even the effigy of any other sovereign than Henry of Bourbon to claim authority in France. Mayenne, in the course of long interviews with the Duke of Parma at Condé and Brussels, had expressed his desire to see Philip king of France, and had promised his best efforts to bring about such a result. In that case he stipulated for the second place in the kingdom for himself, together with a good rich province in perpetual sovereignty, and a large sum of money in hand. Should this course not run smoothly, he would be willing to take the crown himself, in which event he would cheerfully cede to Philip the sovereignty of Brittany and Burgundy, besides a selection of cities to be arranged for at a later day. Although he spoke of himself with modesty, said Alexander, it was very plain that he meant to arrive at the crown himself.[52] Well had the Béarnese alluded to the judgment of Solomon. Were not children, thus ready to dismember their mother, as foul and unnatural as the mother who would divide her child?

And what was this dependence on a foreign tyrant really worth? As we look back upon those dark days with the light of what was then the almost immediate future turned full and glaring upon them, we find it difficult to exaggerate the folly of the chief actors in those scenes of crime. Did not the penniless adventurer, whose keen eyesight and wise recklessness were passing for hallucination and foolhardiness in the eyes of his contemporaries, understand the game he was playing better than did that profound thinker, that mysterious

[52] Parma to Philip, 20 May, 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

but infallible politician, who sat in the Escorial and made the world tremble at every hint of his lips, every stroke of his pen?

The Netherlands—that most advanced portion of Philip's domain, without the possession of which his conquest of England and his incorporation of France were but childish visions, even if they were not monstrous chimeras at best—were to be in a manner left to themselves, while their consummate governor and general was to go forth and conquer France at the head of a force with which he had been in vain attempting to hold those provinces to their obedience. At that very moment the rising young chieftain of the Netherlands was most successfully inaugurating his career of military success. His armies well drilled, well disciplined, well paid, full of heart and of hope, were threatening their ancient enemy in every quarter, while the veteran legions of Spain and Italy, heroes of a hundred Flemish and Frisian battle-fields, were disorganised, starving, and mutinous. The famous ancient legion, the terzo viejo, had been disbanded for its obstinate and confirmed unruliness. The legion of Manrique, sixteen hundred strong, was in open mutiny at Courtray. Farnese had sent the Prince of Ascoli to negotiate with them, but his attempts were all in vain.[53] Two years' arrearages—to be paid, not in cloth at four times what the contractors had paid for it, but in solid gold—were their not unreasonable demands after years of as hard fighting and severe suffering as the world has often seen. But Philip, instead of ducats or cloth, had only sent orders to go forth and conquer a new kingdom for him. Verdugo, too, from Friesland was howling for money, garrotting and hanging his mutinous veterans every day,[54] and sending complaints and most dismal forebodings as often as a courier could make his way through the enemy's lines to Farnese's headquarters. And Farnese, on his part, was garrotting and hanging the veterans.[55]

[53] Parma to Philip, 10 April, 1590. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)
[54] Same to same, 24 June, 1590. (Ibid.)
[55] Same to same, 26 June and 22 July, 1590. (Ibid.)

Alexander did not of course inform his master that he was a mischievous lunatic, who upon any healthy principle of human government ought long ago to have been shut up from all communion with his species. It was very plain, however, from his letters, that such was his innermost thought, had it been safe, loyal, or courteous to express it in plain language.

He was himself stung almost to madness moreover by the presence of Commander Moreo, who hated him, who was perpetually coming over from France to visit him, who was a spy upon all his actions, and who was regularly distilling his calumnies into the ears of Secretary Idiaquez and of Philip himself.[56] The king was informed that Farnese was working for his own ends, and was disgusted with his sovereign; that there never had been a petty prince of Italy that did not wish to become a greater one, or that was not jealous of Philip's power, and that there was not a villain in all Christendom but wished for Philip's death. Moreo followed the prince about to Antwerp, to Brussels, to Spa, whither he had gone to drink the waters for his failing health, pestered him, lectured him, pried upon him, counselled him, enraged him. Alexander told him at last that he cared not if the whole world came to an end so long as Flanders remained, which alone had been entrusted to him, and that if he was expected to conquer France it would be as well to give him the means of performing that exploit. So Moreo told the king that Alexander was wasting time and wasting money, that he was the cause of Egmont's overthrow, and that he would be the cause of the loss of Paris and of the downfall of the whole French scheme; for that he was determined to do nothing to assist Mayenne, or that did not conduce to his private advantage.[57]

Yet Farnese had been not long before informed in sufficiently plain language, and by personages of great influence, that in case he wished to convert his vice-royalty of the Netherlands into a permanent sovereignty, he might

[56] Moreo to Idiaquez, 30 Jan. 1590. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)
[57] Moreo to Philip, 22 June, 1590. Ibid.

rely on the assistance of Henry of Navarre, and perhaps of Queen Elizabeth.[58] The scheme would not have been impracticable, but the duke never listened to it for a moment.

If he were slow in advancing to the relief of starving, agonising Paris, there were sufficient reasons for his delay. Most decidedly and bitterly, but loyally, did he denounce the madness of his master's course in all his communications to that master's private ear.

He told him that the situation in which he found himself was horrible. He had no money for his troops, he had not even garrison bread to put in their mouths. He had not a single stiver to advance them on account. From Friesland, from the Rhine country, from every quarter, cries of distress were rising to heaven, and the lamentations were just. He was in absolute penury. He could not negotiate a bill on the royal account, but had borrowed on his own private security a few thousand crowns which he had given to his soldiers. He was pledging his jewels and furniture like a bankrupt, but all was now in vain to stop the mutiny at Courtray. If that went on it would be of most pernicious example, for the whole army was disorganised, malcontent, and of portentous aspect. "These things," said he, "ought not to surprise people of common understanding, for without money, without credit, without provisions, and in an exhausted country, it is impossible to satisfy the claims, or even to support the life of the army."[59] When he sent the Flemish cavalry to Mayenne in March, it was under the impression that with it that prince would have maintained his reputation and checked the progress of the Béarnese until greater reinforcements could be forwarded. He was now glad that no larger number had been sent, for all would have been sacrificed on the fatal field of Ivry.[60]

The country around him was desperate, believed itself abandoned, and was expecting fresh horrors every day. He

[58] Duplessis to Buzanval. Mem. et Corresp. de Duplessis Mornay, iv. 270.

[59] Parma to Philip, 30 Jan. 20 Feb. 14 March, 24 March, 30 March, 19 April 1590. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

[60] Ibid.

had been obliged to remove portions of the garrisons at Deventer and Zutphen purely to save them from starving and desperation. Every day he was informed by his garrisons that they could feed no longer on fine words or hopes, for in them they found no sustenance.[61]

But Philip told him that he must proceed forthwith to France, where he was to raise the siege of Paris, and occupy Calais and Boulogne in order to prevent the English from sending succour to the Béarnese, and in order to facilitate his own designs on England. Every effort was to be made before the Béarnese climbed into the seat. The Duke of Parma was to talk no more of difficulties, but to conquer them ;[62] a noble phrase on the battle field, but comparatively easy of utterance at the writing-desk !

At last, Philip having made some remittances, miserably inadequate for the necessities of the case, but sufficient to repress in part the mutinous demonstrations throughout the army, Farnese addressed himself with a heavy heart to the work required of him. He confessed the deepest apprehensions of the result both in the Netherlands and in France. He intimated a profound distrust of the French, who had ever been Philip's enemies, and dwelt on the danger of leaving the provinces, unable to protect themselves, badly garrisoned, and starving. "It grieves me to the soul, it cuts me to the heart," he said, "to see that your Majesty commands things which are impossible, for it is our Lord alone that can work miracles. Your Majesty supposes that with the little money you have sent me, I can satisfy all the soldiers serving in these provinces, settle with the Spanish and the German mutineers—because, if they are to be used in the expedition, they must at least be quieted—give money to Mayenne and the Parisians, pay retaining wages (wartgeld) to the German Riders for the protection of these provinces, and make sure of the maritime places where the same mutinous language is held as at Courtray. The poverty, th

[61] Parma to Philip, 30 Jan. 20 Feb. 14 March, 24 March, 30 March, 19 April 1590. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) [62] Philip to Parma, 20 June, 1590. Ibid.

discontent, and the desperation of this unhappy country," he added, "have been so often described to your Majesty that I have nothing to add. I am hanging and garrotting my veterans everywhere, only because they have rebelled for want of pay without committing any excess. Yet under these circumstances I am to march into France with twenty thousand troops—the least number to effect anything withal. I am confused and perplexed because the whole world is exclaiming against me, and protesting that through my desertion the country entrusted to my care will come to utter perdition. On the other hand, the French cry out upon me that I am the cause that Paris is going to destruction, and with it the Catholic cause in France. Every one is pursuing his private ends. It is impossible to collect a force strong enough for the necessary work. Paris has reached its extreme unction, and neither Mayenne nor any one of the confederates has given this invalid the slightest morsel to support her till your Majesty's forces should arrive."[63]

He reminded his sovereign that the country around Paris was eaten bare of food and forage, and yet that it was quite out of the question for him to undertake the transportation of supplies for his army all the way—supplies from the starving Netherlands to starving France. Since the king was so peremptory, he had nothing for it but to obey, but he vehemently disclaimed all responsibility for the expedition, and, in case of his death, he called on his Majesty to vindicate his honour, which his enemies were sure to assail.[64]

The messages from Mayenne becoming daily more pressing, Farnese hastened as much as possible those preparations which at best were so woefully inadequate, and avowed his determination not to fight the Béarnese if it were possible to avoid an action. He feared, however, that with totally insufficient forces he should be obliged to accept the chances of an engagement.[65]

With twelve thousand foot and three thousand horse Far-

[63] Parma to Philip, 22 July, 1590. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)
[64] Ibid. [65] Same to same, 23 July, 1590. Ibid.

nese left the Netherlands in the beginning of August, and arrived on the 3rd of that month at Valenciennes. His little army, notwithstanding his bitter complaints, was of imposing appearance.[65] The archers and halberdiers of his bodyguard were magnificent in taffety and feathers and surcoats of cramoisy velvet. Four hundred nobles served in the cavalry. Arenberg and Barlaymont and Chimay, and other grandees of the Netherlands, in company with Ascoli and the sons of Terranova and Pastrana, and many more great lords of Italy and Spain were in immediate attendance on the illustrious captain. The son of Philip's Secretary of State, Idiaquez, and the nephew of the cardinal-legate, Gaetano, were among the marshals of the camp.[67]

Alexander's own natural authority and consummate powers of organisation had for the time triumphed over the disintegrating tendencies which, it had been seen, were everywhere so rapidly destroying the foremost military establishment of the world. Nearly half his forces, both cavalry and infantry, were Netherlanders; for — as if there were not graves enough in their own little territory—those Flemings, Walloons, and Hollanders were destined to leave their bones on both sides of every well-stricken field of that age between liberty and despotism. And thus thousands of them had now gone forth under the banner of Spain to assist their own tyrant in carrying out his designs upon the capital of France, and to struggle to the death with thousands of their own countrymen who were following the fortunes of the Béarnese. Truly in that age it was religion that drew the boundary line between nations.

The army was divided into three portions. The vanguard was under the charge of the Netherland General, Marquis of Renty. The battalia was commanded by Farnese in person, and the rearguard was entrusted to that veteran Netherlander, La Motte, now called the Count of Everbeck. Twenty pieces of artillery followed the last division.[68] At Valenciennes

[65] Parma to Philip, 28 Aug. 1590. Ibid.

[67] Bor, III. xviii. 535. Coloma, iii. 47. Bentivoglio, P. II. lib. iv. 340 *seqq.*

[68] Bor, Coloma, *ubi sup.* Dondini,

Farnese remained eight days, and from this place Count Charles Mansfeld took his departure in a great rage—resigning his post as chief of artillery because La Motte had received the appointment of general-marshal of the camp—and returned to his father, old Peter Ernest Mansfeld, who was lieutenant-governor of the Netherlands in Parma's absence.[69]

Leaving Valenciennes on the 11th, the army proceeded by way of Quesney, Guise, Soissons, Fritemilon to Meaux. At this place, which is ten leagues from Paris, Farnese made his junction, on the 22nd of August, with Mayenne, who was at the head of six thousand infantry—one half of them Germans under Cobalto, and the other half French—and of two thousand horse.[70]

On arriving at Meaux, Alexander proceeded straightway to the cathedral, and there, in presence of all, he solemnly swore that he had not come to France in order to conquer that kingdom or any portion of it, in the interests of his master, but only to render succour to the Catholic cause and to free the friends and confederates of his Majesty from violence and heretic oppression.[71] Time was to show the value of that oath.

Here the deputation from Paris—the Archbishop of Lyons and his colleagues, whose interview with Henry has just been narrated—were received by the two dukes. They departed, taking with them promises of immediate relief for the starving city. The allies remained five days at Meaux, and leaving that place on the 27th, arrived in the neighbourhood of Chelles, on the last day but one of the summer. They had a united force of five thousand cavalry and eighteen thousand foot.[72]

The summer of horrors was over, and thus with the first

ii. 300, *seqq.* De Thou, t. lxi. lib. 97, p. 183, *seqq.* Bentivoglio, P. II. lib. iv. 340, *seqq.* Meteren, xvi 293, *seqq.*

[69] Letters of Mansfeld to Philip and to Parma, 11 Aug. 1590. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

[70] Lo sucedido a este felicissimo exercito despues que entro en Francia hasta el 3 de Octubre. Arch. de Simancas MS. Parma to Philip, 28 Aug. 1590. Ibid.

[71] Coloma, iii. 47vo.

[72] Lo sucedido, &c., *ubi sup.* Parma's letter last cited.

days of autumn there had come a ray of hope for the proud city which was lying at its last gasp. When the allies came in sight of the monastery of Chelles they found themselves in the immediate neighbourhood of the Béarnese.

The two great captains of the age had at last met face to face. They were not only the two first commanders of their time, but there was not a man in Europe at that day to be at all compared with either of them. The youth, concerning whose earliest campaign an account will be given in the following chapter, had hardly yet struck his first blow. Whether that blow was to reveal the novice or the master was soon to be seen. Meantime in 1590 it would have been considered a foolish adulation to mention the name of Maurice of Nassau in the same breath with that of Navarre or of Farnese.

The scientific duel which was now to take place was likely to task the genius and to bring into full display the peculiar powers and defects of the two chieftains of Europe. Each might be considered to be still in the prime of life, but Alexander, who was turned of forty-five, was already broken in health, while the vigorous Henry was eight years younger, and of an iron constitution. Both had passed their lives in the field, but the king, from nature, education, and the force of circumstances, preferred pitched battles to scientific combinations, while the duke, having studied and practised his art in the great Spanish and Italian schools of warfare, was rather a profound strategist than a professional fighter, although capable of great promptness and intense personal energy when his judgment dictated a battle. Both were born with that invaluable gift which no human being can acquire, authority, and both were adored and willingly obeyed by their soldiers, so long as those soldiers were paid and fed.

The prize now to be contended for was a high one. Alexander's complete success would tear from Henry's grasp the first city of Christendom, now sinking exhausted into his hands, and would place France in the power of the Holy League and at the feet of Philip. Another Ivry would shatter the confederacy, and carry the king in triumph to

his capital and his ancestral throne. On the approach of the combined armies under Parma and Mayenne, the king had found himself most reluctantly compelled to suspend the siege of Paris. His army, which consisted of sixteen thousand foot and five thousand horse, was not sufficiently numerous to confront at the same time the relieving force and to continue the operations before the city.[73] So long, however, as he held the towns and bridges on the great rivers, and especially those keys to the Seine and Marne, Corbeil and Lagny, he still controlled the life-blood of the capital, which indeed had almost ceased to flow.

On the 31st August he advanced towards the enemy. Sir
31 Aug. Edward Stafford, Queen Elizabeth's ambassador, ar-
1590. rived at St. Denis in the night of the 30th August. At a very early hour next morning he heard a shout under his window, and looking down beheld King Henry at the head of his troops, cheerfully calling out to his English friend as he passed his door. "Welcoming us after his familiar manner," said Stafford, "he desired us, in respect of the battle every hour expected, to come as his friends to see and help him, and not to treat of anything which afore we meant, seeing the present state to require it, and the enemy so near that we might well have been interrupted in half-an-hour's talk, and necessity constrained the king to be in every corner, where for the most part we follow him."[74] That day Henry took up his headquarters at the monastery of Chelles, a fortified place within six leagues of Paris, on the right bank of the Marne. His army was drawn up in a wide valley somewhat encumbered with wood and water, extending through a series of beautiful pastures towards two hills of moderate elevation. Lagny, on the left bank of the river, was within less than a league of him on his right hand. On the other side of the hills, hardly out of cannon-shot, was the camp of the allies. Henry, whose natural disposition in this respect needed no prompting, was most eager for a decisive engagement. The

[73] De Thou, *ubi sup.*

[74] Stafford to Burghley, $\frac{28 \text{ August}}{7 \text{ sept.}}$, 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

circumstances imperatively required it of him. His infantry consisted of Frenchmen, Netherlanders, English, Germans, Scotch; but of his cavalry four thousand were French nobles, serving at their own expense, who came to a battle as to a banquet, but who were capable of riding off almost as rapidly, should the feast be denied them. They were volunteers, bringing with them rations for but a few days, and it could hardly be expected that they would remain as patiently as did Parma's veterans, who, now that their mutiny had been appeased by payment of a portion of their arrearages, had become docile again. All the great chieftains who surrounded Henry, whether Catholic or Protestant—Montpensier, Nevers, Soissons, Conti, the Birons, Lavradin, d'Aumont, Tremouille, Turenne, Chatillon, La Noue—were urgent for the conflict, concerning the expediency of which there could indeed be no doubt, while the king was in raptures at the opportunity of dealing a decisive blow at the confederacy of foreigners and rebels who had so long defied his authority and deprived him of his rights.

Stafford came up with the king, according to his cordial invitation, on the same day, and saw the army all drawn up in battle array. While Henry was "eating a morsel in an old house," Turenne joined him with six or seven hundred horsemen and between four and five thousand infantry. "They were the likeliest footmen," said Stafford, "the best countenanced, the best furnished that ever I saw in my life; the most part of them old soldiers that had served under the king for the Religion all this while."

The envoy was especially enthusiastic, however, in regard to the French cavalry. "There are near six thousand horse," said he, "whereof gentlemen above four thousand, about twelve hundred other French, and eight hundred reiters. I never saw, nor I think never any man saw, in France such a company of gentlemen together so well horsed and so well armed."[75]

[75] Stafford to Burghley, $\frac{28 \text{ August}}{7 \text{ Sept.}}$, 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

Henry sent a herald to the camp of the allies, formally challenging them to a general engagement, and expressing a hope that all differences might now be settled by the ordeal of battle, rather than that the sufferings of the innocent people should be longer protracted.[76]

Farnese, on arriving at Meaux, had resolved to seek the enemy and take the hazards of a stricken field. He had misgivings as to the possible result, but he expressly announced this intention in his letters to Philip, and Mayenne confirmed him in his determination.[77] Nevertheless, finding the enemy so eager and having reflected more maturely, he saw no reason for accepting the chivalrous cartel. As commander-in-chief—for Mayenne willingly conceded the supremacy which it would have been absurd in him to dispute—he accordingly replied that it was his custom to refuse a combat when a refusal seemed advantageous to himself, and to offer battle whenever it suited his purposes to fight. When that moment should arrive the king would find him in the field. And, having sent this courteous, but unsatisfactory answer to the impatient Béarnese,[78] he gave orders to fortify his camp, which was already sufficiently strong. Seven days long the two armies lay face to face—Henry and his chivalry chafing in vain for the longed-for engagement—and nothing occurred between those forty or fifty thousand mortal enemies, encamped within a mile or two of each other, save trifling skirmishes leading to no result.[79]

At last Farnese gave orders for an advance. Renty, commander of the vanguard, consisting of nearly all the cavalry, was instructed to move slowly forward over the two hills, and descending on the opposite side, to deploy his forces in two great wings to the right and left. He was secretly directed in this movement to magnify as much as possible the ap-

[76] Bor, Coloma, Dondini, De Thou, Bentivoglio, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[77] Parma to Philip, 28 Aug. 1590. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

[78] Coloma, Bentivoglio, De Thou, *ubi sup.*

[79] Alexander estimated the forces of Henry at 14,000 foot and 5000 horse. Stafford placed them at 17,000 foot and 6000 horse. Letters cited. The united forces of Mayenne and Farnese, as we have seen, amounted to 18,000 foot and 5000 horse.

parent dimensions of his force. Slowly the columns moved over the hills. Squadron after squadron, nearly all of them lancers, with their pennons flaunting gaily in the summer wind, displayed themselves deliberately and ostentatiously in the face of the Royalists. The splendid light-horse of Basti, the ponderous troopers of the Flemish bands of ordnance under Chimay and Berlaymont, and the famous Albanian and Italian cavalry, were mingled with the veteran Leaguers of France who had fought under the Balafré, and who now followed the fortunes of his brother Mayenne. It was an imposing demonstration.[80]

Henry could hardly believe his eyes as the much-coveted opportunity, of which he had been so many days disappointed, at last presented itself, and he waited with more than his usual caution until the plan of attack should be developed by his great antagonist. Parma, on his side, pressed the hand of Mayenne as he watched the movement, saying quietly, "We have already fought our battle and gained the victory."[81] He then issued orders for the whole battalia—which, since the junction, had been under command of Mayenne, Farnese reserving for himself the superintendence of the entire army—to countermarch rapidly towards the Marne and take up a position opposite Lagny. La Motte, with the rearguard, was directed immediately to follow. The battalia had thus become the van, the rearguard the battalia, while the whole cavalry corps by this movement had been transformed from the vanguard into the rear. Renty was instructed to protect his manœuvres, to restrain the skirmishing as much as possible, and to keep the commander-in-chief constantly informed of every occurrence. In the night he was to entrench and fortify himself rapidly and thoroughly, without changing his position.

Under cover of this feigned attack, Farnese arrived at the river side on the 15th September, 1590, seized an open village directly opposite Lagny, which was 15 Sept. 1590.

[80] Bor, Coloma, Bentivoglio, Dondini, De Thou, Meteren, *ubi sup.*
[81] Bentivoglio, *loc. cit.*

connected with it by a stone bridge, and planted a battery of nine pieces of heavy artillery directly opposite the town. Lagny was fortified in the old-fashioned manner, with not very thick walls, and without a terreplain. Its position, however, and its command of the bridge, seemed to render an assault impossible, and De la Fin, who lay there with a garrison of twelve hundred French, had no fear for the security of the place. But Farnese, with the precision and celerity which characterized his movements on special occasions, had thrown pontoon bridges across the river three miles above, and sent a considerable force of Spanish and Walloon infantry to the other side. These troops were ordered to hold themselves ready for an assault, so soon as the batteries opposite should effect a practicable breach. The next day Henry, reconnoitering the scene, saw, with intense indignation, that he had been completely out-generalled. Lagny, the key to the Marne, by holding which he had closed the door on nearly all the food supplies for Paris, was about to be wrested from him. What should he do? Should he throw himself across the river and rescue the place before it fell? This was not to be thought of even by the audacious Béarnese. In the attempt to cross the river, under the enemy's fire, he was likely to lose a large portion of his army. Should he fling himself upon Renty's division which had so ostentatiously offered battle the day before? This at least might be attempted, although not so advantageously as would have been the case on the previous afternoon. To undertake this was the result of a rapid council of generals. It was too late. Renty held the hills so firmly entrenched and fortified that it was an idle hope to carry them by assault. He might hurl column after column against those heights, and pass the day in seeing his men mowed to the earth without result.

His soldiers, magnificent in the open field, could not be relied upon to carry so strong a position by sudden storm, and there was no time to be lost. He felt the enemy a little. There was some small skirmishing, and while it was going on, Farnese opened a tremendous fire across the river upon

Lagny. The weak walls soon crumbled, a breach was effected, the signal for assault was given, and the troops, posted on the other side, after a brief but sanguinary struggle, overcame all resistance, and were masters of the town. The whole garrison, twelve hundred strong, was butchered,[82] and the city thoroughly sacked ; for Farnese had been brought up in the old-fashioned school of Alva and Julian Romero and Commander Requesens.

Thus Lagny was seized before the eyes of Henry, who was forced to look helplessly on his great antagonist's triumph.[83] He had come forth in full panoply and abounding confidence to offer battle. He was foiled of his combat, and he had lost the prize. Never was blow more successfully parried, a counter-stroke more ingeniously planted. The bridges of Charenton and St. Maur now fell into Farnese's hands without a contest. In an incredibly short space of time provisions and munitions were poured into the starving city, two thousand boat-loads arriving in a single day. Paris was relieved.[84] Alexander had made his demonstration, and solved the problem. He had left the Netherlands against his judgment, but he had at least accomplished his French work as none but he could have done it. The king was now in worse plight than ever.[85] His army fell to pieces. His cavaliers, cheated of their battle, and having neither food nor forage, rode off by hundreds every day. "Our state is such," said Stafford, on the 16th September, "and so far unexpected and wonderful, that I am almost ashamed to write, because methinks everybody should think

[82] Coloma, *loc. cit.*

[83] Coloma, De Thou, Dondini, Bentivoglio, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[84] Ibid.

[85] "I dare assure you this king runneth as hard a fortune as ever he did in his life," said Stafford, adding somewhat cynically, "If with his loss was lost nothing I would care but little, though somewhat for Christianity, but it maketh my heart bleed to think if the Spaniard grow here (as he beginneth to settle, and that deeplier than I could ever have believed Frenchmen's hearts would have endured) what mischief will follow to us; and therefore in the mean time, while they may be provided for, if there be not present order given to send men into Flanders to make a present retractive for the Prince of Parma, I do not only doubt, but I do assure myself that we shall not have leisure to tarry here, or expect the good that the helps out of Germany may bring hereafter." Stafford to Burghley, $\frac{28 \text{ Aug.}}{7 \text{ Sept.}}$ 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

I dream. Myself seeing of it methinketh that I dream. For, my lord, to see an army such a one I think as I shall never see again—especially for horsemen and gentlemen—to take a mind to disband upon the taking of such a paltry thing as Lagny, a town no better indeed than Rochester, it is a thing so strange to me that seeing of it I can scarce believe it. They make their excuses of their want, which I know indeed is great—for there were few left with one penny in their purses—but yet that extremity could not be such but that they might have tarried ten days or fifteen at the most that the king desired of them . . . . . From six thousand horse that we were and above, we are come to two thousand—and I do not see an end of our leave-takers, for those be hourly.

"The most I can see we can make account of to tarry are the Viscount Turenne's troops, and Monsieur de Chatillon's, and our Switzers, and Lansquenettes, which make very near five thousand. The first that went away, though he sent word to the king an hour before he would tarry, was the Count Soissons, by whose parting on a sudden and without leave-taking, we judge a discontentment."[86]

The king's army seemed fading into air. Making virtue of necessity he withdrew to St. Denis, and decided to disband his forces, reserving to himself only a flying camp with which to harass the enemy as often as opportunity should offer.

It must be confessed that the Béarnese had been thoroughly out-generalled. "It was not God's will," said Stafford, who had been in constant attendance upon Henry through the whole business; "we deserved it not; for the king might as easily have had Paris as drunk, four or five times. And at the last, if he had not committed those faults that children would not have done, only with the desire to fight and give the battle (which the other never meant), he had had it in the Duke of Parma's sight as he took Lagny in ours."[87] He had been foiled of the battle on which he had set his heart, and in which he felt confident of overthrowing the great captain of the age, and trampling the League under his feet.

[86] Stafford to Burghley, $\frac{6}{16}$ Sept. 1590. (S. P. Office MS.) [87] Ibid.

His capital just ready to sink exhausted into his hands had been wrested from his grasp, and was alive with new hope and new defiance. The League was triumphant, his own army scattering to the four winds. Even a man of high courage and sagacity might have been in despair. Yet never were the magnificent hopefulness, the wise audacity of Henry more signally manifested than now when he seemed most blundering and most forlorn. His hardy nature ever met disaster with so cheerful a smile as almost to perplex disaster herself.

Unwilling to relinquish his grip without a last effort, he resolved on a midnight assault upon Paris. Hoping that the joy at being relieved, the unwonted feasting which had succeeded the long fasting, and the consciousness of security from the presence of the combined armies of the victorious League, would throw garrison and citizens off their guard, he came into the neighbourhood of the Faubourgs St. Jacques, St. Germain, St. Marcel, and St. Michel on the night of 9th September. A desperate effort was made to escalade the walls between St. Jacques and St. Germain. It was foiled, not by the soldiers nor the citizens, but by the sleepless Jesuits, who, as often before during this memorable siege, had kept guard on the ramparts, and who now gave the alarm.[88] The first assailants were hurled from their ladders, the city was roused, and the Duke of Nemours was soon on the spot, ordering burning pitch hoops, stones, and other missiles to be thrown down upon the invaders. The escalade was baffled; yet once more that night, just before dawn, the king in person renewed the attack on the Faubourg St. Germain. The faithful Stafford stood by his side in the trenches, and was witness to his cool determination, his indomitable hope. La Noue too was there, and was wounded in the leg—an accident the results of which were soon to cause much weeping through Christendom.[89] Had one of those garlands of blazing tar which all night had been fluttering from the walls

[88] "Acudieron los primeros á la muralla los padres Jesuitas, guiados por el padre Francisco Xuares Español," &c. Coloma, iii. 51. [89] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

of Paris alighted by chance on the king's head there might have been another history of France. The ladders, too, proved several feet too short, and there were too few of them. Had they been more numerous and longer, the tale might have been a different one. As it was, the king was forced to retire with the approaching daylight.[90]

The characteristics of the great commander of the Huguenots and of the Leaguers' chieftain respectively were well illustrated in several incidents of this memorable campaign. Farnese had been informed by scouts and spies of this intended assault by Henry on the walls of Paris. With his habitual caution he discredited the story.[91] Had he believed it, he might have followed the king in overwhelming force and taken him captive. The penalty of Henry's unparalleled boldness was thus remitted by Alexander's exuberant discretion.

Soon afterwards Farnese laid siege to Corbeil. This little place—owing to the extraordinary skill and determination of its commandant, Rigaut, an old Huguenot officer, who had fought with La Noue in Flanders—resisted for nearly four weeks. It was assaulted at last, Rigaut killed, the garrison of one thousand French soldiers put to the sword, and the town sacked. With the fall of Corbeil both the Seine and Marne were re-opened.[92]

Alexander then made a visit to Paris, where he was received

[90] Coloma, Bentivoglio, Dondini, De Thou, Meteren, *ubi sup.* "The king to stay awhile, his troops together had an enterprise on Paris this day se'night at night, and, with some intelligence that he said he had in it which I could perceive no token of, had an enterprise to take it by escalade, and to that purpose had 6000 footmen and 1200 horse that passed the bridge that he had made at Gonfolar with boats. The king himself was in the enterprise, and I with him, and in the ditch with him, though when he told me the manner I saw it impossible, yet I went with him because he should not say I was against it for fear. But when we came there our ladders were too short by five foot, the larme in the town an hour before and no word of any intelligence, and so we retired without Paris, which I dare assure you the king might have had about five times within these five months, but he is too good a king, and loveth his subjects too well that hate him deadly. There was upon the return of that enterprise no stay, but everybody would be gone, and the king, seeing that there was no remedy, gave them leave on promise of return." Stafford to Burghley, Sept. $\frac{6}{16}$ 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

[91] Coloma, iii. 51 v°.

[92] Coloma, iii. 51, *seqq.* Bentivoglio, Dondini, De Thou, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

with great enthusiasm. The legate, whose efforts and whose money had so much contributed to the successful defence of the capital, had returned to Italy to participate in the election of a new pope. For the "Huguenot pope,"[93] Sixtus V., had died at the end of August, having never bestowed on the League any of his vast accumulated treasures to help it in its utmost need. It was not surprising that Philip was indignant, and had resorted to menace of various kinds against the holy father, when he found him swaying so perceptibly in the direction of the hated Béarnese. Of course when he died his complaint was believed to be Spanish poison. In those days, none but the very obscure were thought capable of dying natural deaths, and Philip was esteemed too consummate an artist to allow so formidable an adversary as Sixtus to pass away in God's time only. Certainly his death was hailed as matter of great rejoicing by the Spanish party in Rome, and as much ignominy bestowed upon his memory as if he had been a heretic; while in Paris his decease was celebrated with bonfires and other marks of popular hilarity.[94]

29 August, 1590.

To circumvent the great Huguenot's reconciliation with the Roman Church was of course an indispensable portion of Philip's plan; for none could be so dull as not to perceive that the resistance of Paris to its heretic sovereign would cease to be very effective, so soon as the sovereign had ceased to be heretic. It was most important therefore that the successor of Sixtus should be the tool of Spain. The leading confederates were well aware of Henry's intentions to renounce the reformed faith, and to return to the communion of Rome whenever he could formally accomplish that measure. The crafty Béarnese knew full well that the road to Paris lay through the gates of Rome. Yet it is proof either of the privacy with which great public matters were then transacted, or of the extraordinary powers of deceit with which Henry was gifted,

[93] "At Paris the pope is accounted a Huguenot." Lyly to Walsingham, April $\frac{2}{12}$ 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

[94] Stafford to Burghley, $\frac{14}{24}$ Sept. 1590. (S. P. Office MS.) De Thou t. xi. lib. 97, pp. 270–273.

that the leaders of protestantism were still hoodwinked in regard to his attitude. Notwithstanding the embassy of Luxembourg, and the many other indications of the king's intentions, Queen Elizabeth continued to regard him as the great champion of the reformed faith. She had just sent him an emerald, which she had herself worn, accompanied by the expression of her wish that the king in wearing it might never strike a blow without demolishing an enemy, and that in his farther progress he might put all his enemies to rout and confusion. "You will remind the king, too," she added, "that the emerald has this virtue, never to break *so long as faith remains entire and firm.*"[95]

And the shrewd Stafford, who was in daily attendance upon him, informed his sovereign that there were no symptoms of wavering on Henry's part. "The Catholics here," said he, "cry hard upon the king to be a Catholic or else that he is lost, and they would persuade him that for all their calling in the Spaniards, both Paris and all other towns will yield to him, if he will but assure them that he will become a Catholic. For my part, I think they would laugh at him when he had done so, and so I find he believeth the same, if he had mind to it, which I find no disposition in him unto it."[96] The not very distant future was to show what the disposition of the bold Gascon really was in this great matter, and whether he was likely to reap nothing but ridicule from his apostasy, should it indeed become a fact. Meantime it was the opinion of the wisest sovereign in Europe, and of one of the most adroit among her diplomatists, that there was really nothing in the rumours as to the king's contemplated conversion.

It was, of course, unfortunate for Henry that his staunch friend and admirer Sixtus was no more. But English diplomacy could do but little in Rome, and men were trembling with apprehension lest that arch-enemy of Elizabeth, that

[95] "Vous ferez souvenir au roi que l'esmeraude a ceste vertu de ne point rompre (a ce que l'on dict) tant que la foy demeure entiere et ferme." Queen to the French Ambassador, "from Oatlands, on a Saturday night, after her coming from hunting." 13 Aug. 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

[96] Stafford to Burghley, $\frac{14}{24}$ Sept. 1590. Ibid.

devoted friend of Philip, the English Cardinal Allen, should be elected to the papal throne. "Great ado is made in Rome," said Stafford, "by the Spanish ambassador, by all corruptions and ways that may be, to make a pope that must needs depend and be altogether at the King of Spain's devotion. If the princes of Italy put not their hands unto it, no doubt they will have their wills, and I fear greatly our villanous Allen, for, in my judgment, I can comprehend no man more with reason to be tied altogether to the King of Spain's will than he. I pray God send him either to God or the Devil first. An evil-minded Englishman, tied to the King of Spain by necessity, finding almost four millions of money, is a dangerous beast for a pope in this time."[97]

Cardinal Allen was doomed to disappointment. His candidacy was not successful, and, after the brief reign—thirteen days long—of Urban VII., Sfondrato wore the triple tiara with the title of Gregory XIV. Before the year closed, that pontiff had issued a brief urging the necessity of extirpating heresy in France, and of electing a Catholic king, and asserting his determination to send to Paris—that bulwark of the Catholic faith—not empty words alone but troops, to be paid fifteen thousand crowns of gold each month, so long as the city should need assistance.[98] It was therefore probable that the great leader of the Huguenots, now that he had been defeated by Farnese, and that his capital was still loyal to the League, would obtain less favour—however conscientiously he might instruct himself—from Gregory XIV. than he had begun to find in the eyes of Sixtus after the triumph of Ivry.

Parma refreshed his army by a fortnight's repose, and early in November determined on his return to the Netherlands. The Leaguers were aghast at his decision, and earnestly besought him to remain. But the duke had given them back their capital, and although this had been accomplished without much bloodshed in their army or his own, sickness was now making sad ravages among his troops, and there was small supply of food or forage for such large forces as had now been

[97] MS. letter last cited. [98] De Thou, t. xi. lib. 97, p. 343.

accumulated in the neighbourhood of Paris. Moreover, dissensions were breaking out between the Spaniards, Italians, and Netherlanders of the relieving army with their French allies. The soldiers and peasants hated the foreigners who came there as victors, even although to assist the Leaguers in overthrowing the laws, government, and nationality of France. The stragglers and wounded on Farnese's march were killed by the country people in considerable numbers, and it was a pure impossibility for him longer to delay his return to the provinces which so much against his will he had deserted.

He marched back by way of Champagne rather than by that of Picardy, in order to deceive the king. Scarcely had he arrived in Champagne when he heard of the retaking of Lagny and Corbeil. So soon as his back was turned, the League thus showed its impotence to retain the advantage which his genius had won. Corbeil, which had cost him a month of hard work, was recaptured in two days. Lagny fell almost as quickly. Earnestly did the confederates implore him to return to their rescue, but he declined almost contemptuously to retrace his steps. His march was conducted in the same order and with the same precision which had marked his advance. Henry, with his flying camp, hung upon his track, harassing him now in front, now in rear, now in flank. None of the skirmishes were of much military importance. A single cavalry combat, however, in which old Marshal Biron was nearly surrounded and was in imminent danger of death or capture, until chivalrously rescued by the king in person at the head of a squadron of lancers, will always possess romantic interest.[99] In a subsequent encounter, near Baroges on the Vesle, Henry had sent Biron forward with a few companies of horse to engage some five hundred carabineers of Farnese on their march towards the frontier, and had himself followed close upon the track with his usual eagerness to witness or participate in every battle. Suddenly Alphonse Corse, who

[99] Bentivoglio, P. II. lib. v. 348, 349. Dondini, ii. 363, *seqq.* Coloma, iii. 52, *seqq.* Report of the King's actions by Grimstone, 23–28 Nov. 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

rode at Henry's side, pointed out to him, not more than a hundred paces off, an officer wearing a felt hat, a great ruff, and a little furred cassock, mounted on a horse without armour or caparisons, galloping up and down and brandishing his sword at the carabineers to compel them to fall back. This was the Duke of Parma, and thus the two great champions of the Huguenots and of the Leaguers—the two foremost captains of the age—had met face to face.[100] At that moment La Noue, riding up, informed the king that he had seen the whole of the enemy's horse and foot in battle array, and Henry, suspecting the retreat of Farnese to be a feint for the purpose of luring him on with his small force to an attack, gave orders to retire as soon as possible.[101]

At Guise, on the frontier, the duke parted with Mayenne, leaving with him an auxiliary force of four thousand foot and five hundred horse, which he could ill spare. He then returned to Brussels, which city he reached on the 4th December, filling every hotel and hospital with his sick soldiers, and having left one-third of his numbers behind him. He had manifested his own military skill in the adroit and successful manner in which he had accomplished the relief of Paris, while the barrenness of the result from the whole expedition vindicated the political sagacity with which he had remonstrated against his sovereign's infatuation.

4 Dec. 1590.

Paris, with the renewed pressure on its two great arteries at Lagny and Corbeil, soon fell into as great danger as before; the obedient Netherlands during the absence of Farnese had been sinking rapidly to ruin, while on the other hand, great progress and still greater preparations in aggressive warfare had been made by the youthful general and stadholder of the Republic.[102]

[100] Grimstone's letter. MS. last cited. Compare Coloma, Dondini, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*

[101] Ibid.

[102] Coloma, Dondini, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* De Thou, t. xi. lib. p. 97, 205, *seqq.* Lo sucedido, &c. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) Parma to Philip, 3 and 21 Oct. 1590.—Ibid. Same to same, 19 Nov. 1590.—Ibid. Same to same, 28 Nov. 1590.—Ibid. Same to same, 31 Dec. 1590.—Ibid.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Prince Maurice — State of the Republican army — Martial science of the period — Reformation of the military system by Prince Maurice — His military genius — Campaign in the Netherlands — The fort and town of Zutphen taken by the States' forces — Attack upon Deventer — Its capitulation — Advance on Groningen, Delfzyl, Opslag, Yementil, Steenwyk, and other places — Farnese besieges Fort Knodsenburg — Prince Maurice hastens to its relief — A skirmish ensues resulting in the discomfiture of the Spanish and Italian troops — Surrender of Hulst and Nymegen — Close of military operations of the year.

WHILE the events revealed in the last chapter had been occupying the energies of Farnese and the resources of his sovereign, there had been ample room for Prince Maurice to mature his projects, and to make a satisfactory beginning in the field. Although Alexander had returned to the Netherlands before the end of the year 1590, and did not set forth on his second French campaign until late in the following year, yet the condition of his health, the exhaustion of his funds, and the dwindling of his army, made it impossible for him to render any effectual opposition to the projects of the youthful general.

For the first time Maurice was ready to put his theories and studies into practice on an extensive scale. Compared with modern armaments, the warlike machinery to be used for liberating the republic from its foreign oppressors would seem almost diminutive. But the science and skill of a commander are to be judged by the results he can work out with the materials within reach. His progress is to be measured by a comparison with the progress of his contemporaries—coheirs with him of what Time had thus far bequeathed.

The regular army of the republic, as reconstructed, was

but ten thousand foot and two thousand horse, but it was capable of being largely expanded by the trainbands of the cities, well disciplined and enured to hardship, and by the levies of German reiters and other foreign auxiliaries in such numbers as could be paid for by the hard-pressed exchequer of the provinces.

To the state-council, according to its original constitution, belonged the levying and disbanding of troops, the conferring of military offices, and the supervision of military operations by sea and land. It was its duty to see that all officers made oath of allegiance to the United Provinces.

The course of Leicester's administration, and especially the fatal treason of Stanley and of York, made it seem important for the true lovers of their country to wrest from the state-council, where the English had two seats, all political and military power. And this, as has been seen, was practically but illegally accomplished. The silent revolution by which at this epoch all the main attributes of government passed into the hands of the States-General—acting as a league of sovereignties—has already been indicated. The period during which the council exercised functions conferred on it by the States-General themselves was brief and evanescent. The jealousy of the separate provinces soon prevented the state-council—a supreme executive body entrusted with the general defence of the commonwealth—from causing troops to pass into or out of one province or another without a patent from his Excellency the Prince, not as chief of the whole army, but as governor and captain-general of Holland, or Gelderland, or Utrecht, as the case might be.

The highest military office in the Netherlands was that of captain-general or supreme commander. This quality was from earliest times united to that of stadholder, who stood, as his title implied, in the place of the reigning sovereign, whether count, duke, king, or emperor. After the foundation of the Republic this dynastic form, like many others, remained, and thus Prince Maurice was at first only captain-general of Holland and Zeeland, and subsequently of Gelderland, Utrecht, and

Overyssel, after he had been appointed stadholder of those three provinces in 1590 on the death of Count Nieuwenaar. However much in reality he was general-in-chief of the army, he never in all his life held the appointment of captain-general of the Union.

To obtain a captain's commission in the army, it was necessary to have served four years, while three years' service was the necessary preliminary to the post of lieutenant or ensign. Three candidates were presented by the province for each office, from whom the stadholder appointed one. The commissions, except those of the highest commanders, were made out in the name of the States-General, by advice and consent of the council of state. The oath of allegiance, exacted from soldiers as well as officers, mentioned the name of the particular province to which they belonged, as well as that of the States-General.[1] It thus appears that, especially after Maurice's first and successful campaigns, the supreme authority over the army really belonged to the States-General, and that the powers of the state-council in this regard fell, in the course of four years, more and more into the back-ground, and at last disappeared almost entirely. During the active period of the war, however, the effect of this revolution was in fact rather a greater concentration of military power than its dispersion, for the States-General meant simply the province of Holland. Holland was the republic.

[1] For example, the oath for a soldier of Holland was: — I promise and swear to the States-General of the United Netherlands who remain by the Union, and by the maintenance of the reformed religion, and also to the knights, nobles, and regents (magistrates), of the countship and province of Holland representing the States of said province, and therewith to the States of the other provinces in which I may be employed, and also to the regents of the cities as well within as without the province of Holland where I may be placed in garrison to be faithful and true. See 'Journaal van Anthonis Duyck' (1591–1602): uitgegeven op Last van het Departement van Oorlog, met Inleiding en Aanteekeningen door Lodewijk Mulder, Kapitein der Infanterie. 's Gravenhage Martinus Nyhoff, 1862, pp. xlvi. xlvii. All lovers of Dutch history must sincerely rejoice that this valuable contemporary manuscript is at last in course of publication, and that it is in the hands of so accomplished and able an editor. I am under the deepest obligations to Captain Mulder for the information derived, in regard to the military history of this epoch in the Netherlands, from his learned and lucid introduction, and in drawing largely and almost exclusively from this source in the first part of the present chapter, I desire to express my thanks in the warmest manner.

The organisation of the infantry was very simple. The tactical unit was the company. A temporary combination of several companies made a regiment, commanded by a colonel or lieutenant-colonel, but for such regiments there was no regular organisation. Sometimes six or seven companies were thus combined, sometimes three times that number, but the strength of a force, however large, was always estimated by the number of companies, not of regiments.[2]

The normal strength of an infantry company, at the beginning of Maurice's career, may be stated at one hundred and thirteen, commanded by one captain, one lieutenant, one ensign, and by the usual non-commissioned officers. Each company was composed of musketeers, harquebusseers, pikemen, halberdeers, and buckler-men. Long after portable firearms had come into use, the greater portion of foot soldiers continued to be armed with pikes, until the introduction of the fixed bayonet enabled the musketeer to do likewise the duty of pikeman. Maurice was among the first to appreciate the advantage of portable firearms, and he accordingly increased the proportion of soldiers armed with the musket in his companies. In a company of a hundred and thirteen, including officers, he had sixty-four armed with firelocks to thirty carrying pikes and halberds. As before his time the proportion between the arms had been nearly even, he thus more than doubled the number of firearms.[3]

Of these weapons there were two sorts, the musket and the harquebus. The musket was a long, heavy, unmanageable instrument. When fired it was placed upon an iron gaffle or fork, which the soldier carried with him, and stuck before him into the ground. The bullets of the musket were twelve to the pound.[4]

The harquebus—or hak-bus, hook-gun, so called because of the hook in the front part of the barrel to give steadiness in firing—was much lighter, was discharged from the hand, and carried bullets of twenty-four to the pound. Both weapons had matchlocks.[5]

[2] Mulder, Inleiding, l. li. [3] Ibid. li. lii. [4] Ibid. liv. [5] Ibid. liv.-lix.

The pike was eighteen feet long at least, and pikemen as well as halberdsmen carried rapiers.[6]

There were three buckler-men to each company, introduced by Maurice for the personal protection of the leader of the company. The prince was often attended by one himself, and, on at least one memorable occasion, was indebted to this shield for the preservation of his life.[7]

The cavalry was divided into lancers and carabineers. The unit was the squadron, varying in number from sixty to one hundred and fifty, until the year 1591, when the regular complement of the squadron was fixed at one hundred and twenty.[8]

As the use of cavalry on the battle-field at that day, or at least in the Netherlands, was not in rapidity of motion, nor in severity of shock—the attack usually taking place on a trot—Maurice gradually displaced the lance in favour of the carbine.[9] His troopers thus became rather mounted infantry than regular cavalry.

The carbine was at least three feet long, with wheel-locks, and carried bullets of thirty to the pound.[10]

The artillery was a peculiar organisation. It was a guild of citizens, rather than a strictly military force like the cavalry and infantry. The arm had but just begun to develope itself, and it was cultivated as a special trade by the guild of the holy Barbara existing in all the principal cities. Thus a municipal artillery gradually organised itself, under the direction of the gun-masters (bus-meesters), who in secret laboured at the perfection of their art, and who taught it to their apprentices and journeymen, as the principles of other crafts were conveyed by master to pupil. This system furnished a powerful element of defence at a period when every city had in great measure to provide for its own safety.[11]

In the earlier campaigns of Maurice three kinds of artillery were used; the whole cannon (kartow) of forty-eight pounds; the half-cannon, or twenty-four pounder, and the field-piece

[6] Mudler, liv.-lix. [7] Ibid. [8] Ibid. [9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid. [11] Ibid. lix.-lxxiv.

carrying a ball of twelve pounds. The two first were called battering pieces or siege-guns. All the guns were of bronze.[12]

The length of the whole cannon was about twelve feet; its weight one hundred and fifty times that of the ball, or about seven thousand pounds. It was reckoned that the whole kartow could fire from eighty to one hundred shots in an hour. Wet hair cloths were used to cool the piece after every ten or twelve discharges. The usual charge was twenty pounds of powder.[13]

The whole gun was drawn by thirty-one horses, the half-cannon by twenty-three.[14]

The field-piece required eleven horses, but a regular field-artillery, as an integral part of the army, did not exist, and was introduced in much later times. In the greatest pitched battle ever fought by Maurice, that of Nieuport, he had but six field-pieces.[15]

The prince also employed mortars in his sieges, from which were thrown grenades, hot shot, and stones; but no greater distance was reached than six hundred yards. Bomb-shells were not often used although they had been known for a century.[16]

Before the days of Maurice a special education for engineers had never been contemplated. Persons who had privately acquired a knowledge of fortification and similar branches of the science were employed upon occasion, but regular corps of engineers there were none. The prince established a course of instruction in this profession at the University of Leyden, according to a system drawn up by the celebrated Stevinus.[17]

Doubtless the most important innovation of the prince, and the one which required the most energy to enforce, was the use of the spade. His soldiers were jeered at by the enemy as mere boors and day labourers who were dishonouring themselves and their profession by the use of that implement instead of the sword. Such a novelty was a shock to all the

[12] Mulder, lix.-lxxiv. [13] Ibid. [14] Ibid. [15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid. [17] Ibid, lxxiv.-lxxix.

military ideas of the age, and it was only the determination and vigour of the prince and of his cousin Lewis William that ultimately triumphed over the universal prejudice.[18]

The pay of the common soldier varied from ten to twenty florins the month, but every miner had eighteen florins, and, when actually working in the mines, thirty florins monthly. Soldiers used in digging trenches received, over and above their regular pay, a daily wage of from ten to fifteen styvers, or nearly a shilling sterling.[19]

Another most wholesome improvement made by the prince was in the payment of his troops. The system prevailing in every European country at that day, by which Governments were defrauded and soldiers starved, was most infamous. The soldiers were paid through the captain, who received the wages of a full company, when perhaps not one-third of the names on the muster-roll were living human beings. Accordingly two-thirds of all the money stuck to the officer's fingers, and it was not thought a disgrace to cheat the Government by dressing and equipping for the day a set of ragamuffins, caught up in the streets for the purpose, and made to pass muster as regular soldiers.[20]

These passe-volants, or scarecrows, were passed freely about from one company to another, and the indecency of the fraud was never thought a disgrace to the colours of the company.

Thus, in the Armada year, the queen had demanded that a portion of her auxiliary force in the Netherlands should be sent to England. The States agreed that three thousand of these English troops, together with a few cavalry companies, should go, but stipulated that two thousand should remain in the provinces. The queen accepted the proposal, but when the two thousand had been counted out, it appeared that there was scarcely a man left for the voyage to England. Yet every one of the English captains had claimed full pay for his company from her Majesty's exchequer.[21]

[18] Reyd, ix. 180, *seqq.*
[19] Mulder, *ubi sup.*
[20] Ibid, xciv. xcv.
[21] Ibid, xcix.

Against this tide of peculation and corruption the strenuous Maurice set himself with heart and soul, and there is no doubt that to his reformation in this vital matter much of his military success was owing. It was impossible that roguery and venality should ever furnish a solid foundation for the martial science.

To the student of military history the campaigns and sieges of Maurice, and especially the earlier ones, are of great importance. There is no doubt whatever, that the youth who now, after deep study and careful preparation, was measuring himself against the first captains of the age, was founding the great modern school of military science. It was in this Netherland academy, and under the tuition of its consummate professor, that the commanders of the seventeenth century not only acquired the rudiments, but perfected themselves in the higher walks of their art. Therefore the siege operations, in which all that had been invented by modern genius, or rescued from the oblivion which had gathered over ancient lore during the more vulgar and commonplace practice of the mercenary commanders of the day was brought into successful application, must always engage the special attention of the military student.

To the general reader, more interested in marking the progress of civilisation and the advance of the people in the path of development and true liberty, the spectacle of the young stadholder's triumphs has an interest of another kind. At the moment when a thorough practical soldier was most needed by the struggling little commonwealth, to enable it to preserve liberties partially secured by its unparalleled sacrifices of blood and treasure during a quarter of a century, and to expel the foreign invader from the soil which he had so long profaned, it was destined that a soldier should appear.

Spade in hand, with his head full of Roman castrametation and geometrical problems, a prince, scarce emerged from boyhood, presents himself on that stage where grizzled Mansfelds, drunken Hohenlos, and truculent Verdugos have been so long enacting that artless military drama which consists of hard

knocks and wholesale massacres. The novice is received with universal hilarity. But although the machinery of war varies so steadily from age to age that a commonplace commander of to-day, rich in the spoils of preceding time, might vanquish the Alexanders, and Cæsars, and Frederics, with their antiquated enginry, yet the moral stuff out of which great captains, great armies, great victories are created, is the simple material it was in the days of Sesostris or Cyrus. The moral and physiological elements remain essentially the same as when man first began to walk up and down the earth and destroy his fellow-creatures.

To make an army a thorough mowing-machine, it then seemed necessary that it should be disciplined into complete mechanical obedience. To secure this, prompt payment of wages and inexorable punishment of delinquencies were indispensable. Long arrearages were now converting Farnese's veterans into systematic marauders; for unpaid soldiers in every age and country have usually degenerated into highwaymen, and it is an impossibility for a sovereign, with the strictest intentions, to persist in starving his soldiers and in killing them for feeding themselves. In Maurice's little army, on the contrary, there were no back-wages and no thieving. At the siege of Delfzyl Maurice hung two of his soldiers for stealing, the one a hat and the other a poniard, from the townsfolk, after the place had capitulated.[22] At the siege of Hulst he ordered another to be shot, before the whole camp, for robbing a woman.[23] This seems sufficiently harsh, but war is not a pastime nor a very humane occupation. The result was, that robbery disappeared, and it is better for all that enlisted men should be soldiers rather than thieves. To secure the ends which alone can justify war—and if the Netherlanders engaged in defending national existence and human freedom against foreign tyranny were not justifiable then a just war has never been waged—a disciplined army is vastly more humane in its operations than a band of brigands. Swift and condign punishments by the law-martial,

[22] Reyd, ix. 171. [23] Van der Kemp, 112.

for even trifling offences, is the best means of discipline yet devised.

To bring to utmost perfection the machinery already in existence, to encourage invention, to ponder the past with a practical application to the present, to court fatigue, to scorn pleasure, to concentrate the energies on the work in hand, to cultivate quickness of eye and calmness of nerve in the midst of danger, to accelerate movements, to economise blood even at the expense of time, to strive after ubiquity and omniscience in the details of person and place, these were the characteristics of Maurice, and they have been the prominent traits of all commanders who have stamped themselves upon their age. Although his method of war-making differed as far as possible from that of the Béarnese, yet the two had one quality in common, personal insensibility to fear. But in the case of Henry, to confront danger for its own sake was in itself a pleasure, while the calmer spirit of Maurice did not so much seek the joys of the combat as refuse to desist from scientific combinations in the interests of his personal safety. Very frequently, in the course of his early campaigns, the prince was formally and urgently requested by the States-General not to expose his life so recklessly, and before he had passed his twenty-fifth year he had received wounds which, but for fortunate circumstances, would have proved mortal, because he was unwilling to leave special operations on which much was depending to other eyes than his own. The details of his campaigns are, of necessity, the less interesting to a general reader from their very completeness. Desultory or semi-civilised warfare, where the play of the human passions is distinctly visible, where individual man, whether in buff jerkin or Milan coat of proof, meets his fellow man in close mortal combat, where men starve by thousands or are massacred by town-fulls, where hamlets or villages blaze throughout whole districts or are sunk beneath the ocean—scenes of rage, hatred, vengeance, self-sacrifice, patriotism, where all the virtues and vices of which humanity is capable stride to and fro in their most violent colours and most colossal shape—

where man in a moment rises almost to divinity, or sinks beneath the beasts of the field—such tragical records of which the sanguinary story of mankind is full—and no portion of them more so than the Netherland chronicles—appeal more vividly to the imagination than the neatest solution of mathematical problems. Yet, if it be the legitimate end of military science to accomplish its largest purposes at the least expense of human suffering; if it be progress in civilisation to acquire by scientific combination what might be otherwise attempted, and perhaps vainly attempted, by infinite carnage, then is the professor with his diagrams, standing unmoved amid danger, a more truly heroic image than Cœur-de-Lion with his battle-axe or Alva with his truncheon.

The system—then a new one—which Maurice introduced to sustain that little commonwealth from sinking of which he had become at the age of seventeen the predestined chief, was the best under the circumstances that could have been devised. Patriotism the most passionate, the most sublime, had created the republic. To maintain its existence against perpetual menace required the exertion of perpetual skill.

Passionless as algebra, the genius of Maurice was ready for the task. Strategic points of immense value, important cities and fortresses, vital river-courses and communications—which foreign tyranny had acquired during the tragic past with a patient iniquity almost without a parallel, and which patriotism had for years vainly struggled to recover—were the earliest trophies and prizes of his art. But the details of his victories may be briefly indicated, for they have none of the picturesqueness of crime. The sieges of Naarden, Harlem, Leyden, were tragedies of maddening interest, but the recovery of Zutphen, Deventer, Nymegen, Groningen, and many other places—all important though they were—was accomplished with the calmness of a consummate player, who throws down on the table the best half dozen invincible cards which it thus becomes superfluous to play.

There were several courses open to the prince before taking

the field. It was desirable to obtain control of the line of the Waal, by which that heart of the republic—Holland—would be made entirely secure. To this end, Gertruydenberg—lately surrendered to the enemy by the perfidy of the Englishman Wingfield, to whom it had been entrusted—Bois le Duc, and Nymegen were to be wrested from Spain.

It was also important to hold the Yssel, the course of which river led directly through the United Netherlands, quite to the Zuyder Zee, cutting off Friesland, Groningen, and Gelderland from their sister provinces of Holland and Zeeland. And here again the keys to this river had been lost by English treason. The fort of Zutphen and the city of Deventer had been transferred to the Spaniard by Roland York and Sir William Stanley,[24] in whose honour the republic had so blindly confided, and those cities it was now necessary to reduce by regular siege before the communications between the eastern and western portions of the little commonwealth could ever be established.

Still farther in the ancient Frisian depths, the memorable treason of that native Netherlander, the high-born Renneberg, had opened the way for the Spaniard's foot into the city of Groningen. Thus this whole important province—with its capital—long subject to the foreign oppressor, was garrisoned with his troops.

Verdugo, a veteran officer of Portuguese birth, who had risen from the position of hostler[25] to that of colonel and royal stadholder, commanded in Friesland. He had in vain demanded reinforcements and supplies from Farnese, who most reluctantly was obliged to refuse them in order that he might obey his master's commands to neglect everything for the sake of the campaign in France.

And Verdugo, stripped of all adequate forces to protect his important province, was equally destitute of means for feeding the troops that were left to him. "I hope to God that I may do my duty to the king and your Highness," he cried, "but I find myself sold up and pledged to such an extent that I am

[24] Vol II. of this work, chap. xiii. [25] Reyd, ix. 172.

poorer than when I was a soldier at four crowns a month. And everybody in the town is as desperate as myself." [26]

Maurice, after making a feint of attacking Gertruydenberg and Bois le Duc, so that Farnese felt compelled, with considerable difficulty, to strengthen the garrison of those places, came unexpectedly to Arnhem with a force of nine thousand foot and sixteen hundred horse. He had previously and with great secrecy sent some companies of infantry under Sir Francis Vere to Doesburg.

On the 23rd May (1591) five peasants and six peasant women made their appearance at dawn of day before the chief guard-house of the great fort in the Bad-meadow (Vel-uwe), opposite Zutphen, on the west side of the Yssel. It was not an unusual occurrence. These boors and their wives had brought baskets of eggs, butter, and cheese, for the garrison, and they now set themselves quietly down on the ground before the gate, waiting for the soldiers of the garrison to come out and traffic with them for their supplies. Very soon several of the guard made their appearance, and began to chaffer with the peasants, when suddenly one of the women plucked a pistol from under her petticoats and shot dead the soldier who was cheapening her eggs. The rest of the party, transformed in an instant from boors to soldiers, then sprang upon the rest of the guard, overpowered and bound them, and took possession of the gate. A considerable force, which had been placed in ambush by Prince Maurice near the spot, now rushed forward, and in a few minutes the great fort of Zutphen was mastered by the States' forces without loss of a man. It was a neat and perfectly successful stratagem.[27]

23 May, 1591.

Next day Maurice began the regular investment of the city. On the 26th, Count Lewis William arrived with some Frisian companies. On the 27th, Maurice threw a bridge of boats from the Bad-meadow side, across the river to the Weert before the city. On the 28th

24 May.

[26] Groen v. Prinsterer. (Archives, &c., II. Serie i. 128.)
[27] Meteren, xv. 298. Bor III. xxviii. 560, 562.

he had got batteries, mounting thirty-two guns, into position, commanding the place at three points. On the 30th the town capitulated. Thus within exactly one week from the firing of the pistol shot by the supposed butterwoman, this fort and town, which had so long resisted the efforts of the States, and were such important possessions of the Spaniards, fell into the hands of Maurice. The terms of surrender were easy. The city being more important than its garrison, the soldiers were permitted to depart with bag and baggage. The citizens were allowed three days to decide whether to stay under loyal obedience to the States-General, or to take their departure. Those who chose to remain were to enjoy all the privileges of citizens of the United Provinces.[28] 30 May.

But very few substantial citizens were left, for such had been the tyranny, the misery, and the misrule during the long occupation by a foreign soldiery of what was once a thriving Dutch town, that scarcely anybody but paupers and vagabonds were left. One thousand houses were ruined and desolate. It is superfluous to add that the day of its restoration to the authority of the Union was the beginning of its renewed prosperity.

Maurice, having placed a national garrison in the place, marched the same evening straight upon Deventer, seven miles farther down the river, without pausing to sleep upon his victory. His artillery and munitions were sent rapidly down the Yssel. 30 May.

Within five days he had thoroughly invested the city, and brought twenty-eight guns to bear upon the weakest part of its defences.

It was a large, populous, well-built town, once a wealthy member of the Hanseatic League, full of fine buildings, both public and private, the capital of the rich and fertile province of Overyssel, and protected by a strong wall and moat—as well-fortified a place as could be found in the Netherlands.[29] The garrison consisted of fourteen

[28] Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Duyck, 6–14. [29] Guicciardini, *in voce.*

hundred Spaniards and Walloons, under the command of Count Herman van den Berg, first cousin of Prince Maurice.

No sooner had the States army come before the city than a Spanish captain observed—"We shall now have a droll siege—cousins on the outside, cousins on the inside. There will be a sham fight or two, and then the cousins will make it up, and arrange matters to suit themselves."[30]

Such hints had deeply wounded Van den Berg, who was a fervent Catholic, and as loyal a servant to Philip II. as he could have been, had that monarch deserved, by the laws of nature and by his personal services and virtues, to govern all the swamps of Friesland. He slept on the gibe, having ordered all the colonels and captains of the garrison to attend at solemn mass in the great church the next morning. He there declared to them all publicly that he felt outraged at the suspicions concerning his fidelity, and after mass he took the sacrament, solemnly swearing never to give up the city or even to speak of it until he had made such resistance that he must be carried from the breach. So long as he could stand or sit he would defend the city entrusted to his care.[31]

The whole council who had come from Zutphen to Maurice's camp were allowed to deliberate concerning the siege. The enemy had been seen hovering about the neighbourhood in considerable numbers, but had not ventured an attempt to throw reinforcements into the place. Many of the counsellors argued against the siege. It was urged that the resistance would be determined and protracted, and that the Duke of Parma was sure to take the field in person to relieve so important a city, before its reduction could be effected.

But Maurice had thrown a bridge across the Yssel above and another below the town, had carefully and rapidly taken measures in the success of which he felt confident, and now declared that it would be cowardly and shameful to abandon an enterprise so well begun.

The city had been formally summoned to surrender, and a calm but most decided refusal had been returned.

[30] Reyd, ix. 169. [31] Ibid.

On the 9th June the batteries began playing, and after four thousand six hundred shots a good breach had been effected in the defences along the Kaye—an earthen work lying between two strong walls of masonry. 9 June, 1591

The breach being deemed practicable, a storm was ordered. To reach the Kaye it was necessary to cross a piece of water called the Haven, over which a pontoon bridge was hastily thrown. There was now a dispute among the English, Scotch, and Netherlanders for precedence in the assault. It was ultimately given to the English, in order that the bravery of that nation might now on the same spot wipe out the disgrace inflicted upon its name by the treason of Sir William Stanley. The English did their duty well and rushed forward merrily, but the bridge proved too short. Some sprang over and pushed boldly for the breach. Some fell into the moat and were drowned. Others, sustained by the Netherlanders under Solms, Meetkerke, and Brederode, effected their passage by swimming, leaping, or wading, so that a resolute attack was made. Herman van den Berg met them in the breach at the head of seven companies. The defenders were most ferocious in their resistance. They were also very drunk. The count had placed many casks of Rhenish and of strong beer within reach, and ordered his soldiers to drink their fill as they fought.[32] He was himself as vigorous in his potations as he was chivalrous with sword and buckler. Two pages and two lieutenants fell at his side, but still he fought at the head of his men with a desperation worthy of his vow, until he fell wounded in the eye and was carried from the place. Notwithstanding this disaster to the commander of the town, the assailants were repulsed, losing two hundred and twenty-five in killed and wounded—Colonel Meetkerke and his brother, two most valuable Dutch officers, among them.[33]

[32] Reyd, ix. 169.

[33] Ibid. Bor, III. xxviii. 563, 564. Meteren, xvi. 298. Duyck, 20, 21. Colonel Nicolas Meetkerke died of his wounds in this assault. He was less than thirty years of age, but already a veteran soldier, and had distinguished himself in the English-Dutch expedition, under Essex, against Portugal in 1587. His elder brother Antony had been killed before Zutphen fort in 1586. His two younger brothers

During the whole of the assault, a vigorous cannonade had been kept up upon other parts of the town, and houses and church-towers were toppling down in all directions. Meanwhile the inhabitants—for it was Sunday—instead of going to service were driven towards the breach by the serjeant-major, a truculent Spaniard, next in command to Van den Berg, who ran about the place with a great stick, summoning the Dutch burghers to assist the Spanish garrison on the wall.[34] It was thought afterwards that this warrior would have been better occupied among the soldiers, at the side of his commander.

A chivalrous incident in the open field occurred during the assault. A gigantic Albanian cavalry officer came prancing out of Deventer into the spaces between the trenches, defying any officer in the States' army to break a lance with him. Prince Maurice forbade any acceptance of the challenge, but Lewis van der Cathulle, son of the famous Ryhove of Ghent, unable to endure the taunts and bravado of this champion, at last obtained permission to encounter him in single combat. They met accordingly with much ceremony, tilted against each other, and shivered their lances in good style, but without much effect. The Albanian then drew a pistol. Cathulle had no weapon save a cutlass, but with this weapon he succeeded in nearly cutting off the hand which held the pistol. He then took his enemy prisoner, the vain-glorious challenger throwing his gold chain around his conqueror's neck in token of his victory. Prince Maurice caused his wound to be bound up and then liberated him, sending him into the city with a message to the governor.[35]

During the following night the bridge, over which the

Baldwin and Adolph, were both in the army. Adolph was shot through the body in this same storming party in which Nicholas was killed, but seems to have recovered. They were the sons of Adolph Meetkerke, formerly president of Flanders, who, on account of his participation in Leicester's attempt upon Leyden (see vol. II. of this work, chap. xvii.) was a refugee in England. See Mulder's note to Duyck, p. 20. See note, p. 599.

How much does the brief martial record of these four brothers in this war of Dutch burghers for national existence remind us of the simple but heroic annals of many a family of our own countrymen in the great war now waging for the same object! (1863).

[34] Reyd, *ubi sup.*

[35] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

assailants had nearly forced their way into the town, was vigorously attacked by the garrison, but Count Lewis William, in person, with a chosen band defended it stoutly till morning, beating back the Spaniards with heavy loss in a sanguinary midnight contest.[36]

Next morning there was a unanimous outcry on the part of the besieged for a capitulation. It was obvious that, June 10, with the walls shot to ruins as they had been, the 1591. place was no longer tenable against Maurice's superior forces. A trumpet was sent to the prince before the dawn of day, and on the 10th of June, accordingly, the place capitulated.[37]

It was arranged that the garrison should retire with arms and baggage whithersoever they chose. Van den Berg stipulated nothing in favour of the citizens, whether through forgetfulness or spite does not distinctly appear. But the burghers were received like brothers. No plunder was permitted, no ransom demanded, and the city took its place among its sisterhood of the United Provinces.[38] Van den Berg himself was received at the prince's head-quarters with much cordiality. He was quite blind; but his wound seemed to be the effect of exterior contusions, and he ultimately recovered the sight of one eye. There was much free conversation between himself and his cousins during the brief interval in which he was their guest.

"I've often told Verdugo," said he, "that the States had no power to make a regular siege, nor to come with proper artillery into the field, and he agreed with me. But we were both wrong, for I now see the contrary."

To which Count Lewis William replied with a laugh: "My dear cousin, I've observed that in all your actions you were in the habit of despising us Beggars, and I have said that you would one day draw the shortest straw in consequence. I'm glad to hear this avowal from your own lips."

[36] Bor, *ubi sup.*

[37] Ibid. Meteren, Reyd, *ubi sup.* Duyck, 20–25. Parma to Philip, 10 June, 1591. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

[38] Ibid.

Herman attempted no reply but let the subject drop, seeming to regret having said so much.[39]

Soon afterwards he was forwarded by Maurice in his own coach to Ulff, where he was attended by the prince's body physician till he was re-established in health.[40]

Thus within ten days of his first appearance before its walls, the city of Deventer, and with it a whole province, had fallen into the hands of Maurice. It began to be understood that the young pedant knew something about his profession, and that he had not been fagging so hard at the science of war for nothing.[41]

The city was in a sorry plight when the States took possession of it. As at Zutphen, the substantial burghers had wandered away, and the foreign soldiers bivouacking there so long had turned the stately old Hanseatic city into a brick and mortar wilderness. Hundreds of houses had been demolished by the garrison, that the iron might be sold and the woodwork burned for fuel; for the enemy had conducted himself as if feeling in his heart that the occupation could not be a permanent one, and as if desirous to make the place as desolate as possible for the Beggars when they should return.[42]

The dead body of the traitor York, who had died and been buried in Deventer, was taken from the tomb, after the capture of the city, and with the vulgar ferocity so characteristic of the times, was hung, coffin and all, on the gibbet for the delectation of the States' soldiery.[43]

Maurice, having thus in less than three weeks recovered two most important cities, paused not an instant in his career but moved at once on Groningen. There was a strong pressure put upon him to attempt the capture of Nymegen,

[39] Reyd, *ubi sup.*

[40] Bor, *ubi sup.*

[41] Turenne (Duc de Bouillon) was excessively enthusiastic. "Je ne vous sçauroy dire la joie," he wrote to Count John the Elder, "que j'ay de l'honneur que Monsieur le Comte Maurice votre nepveu a acquis en la prise de Zutphen et Deventer. Il a effacé en huict jours la réputation que le Duc de Parme a acquis en dix ans, et faict bien paraistre que la vertu et généralité de sa Maison est immortelle." Groen v. Prinsterer. (Archives, II. S. i. 169.)

[42] Reyd, *ubi sup.*

[43] Bor, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

but the understanding with the Frisian stadholders and his troops had been that the enterprise upon Groningen should follow the reduction of Deventer.

On the 26th June Maurice appeared before Groningen. Next day, as a precautionary step, he moved to the right and attacked the strong city of Delfzyl. This place capitulated to him on the 2nd July. The fort of Opslag surrendered on the 7th July. He then moved to the west of Groningen, and attacked the forts of Yementil and Lettebaest, which fell into his hands on the 11th July. He then moved along the Nyenoort through the Seven Wolds and Drenthe to Steenwyk, before which strongly fortified city he arrived on the 15th July.[44]

26 June, 1591.

2 July, 1591.

7 July.

11 July.

15 July.

Meantime, he received intercepted letters from Verdugo to the Duke of Parma, dated 19th June from Groningen. In these, the Spanish stadholder informed Farnese that the enemy was hovering about his neighbourhood, and that it would be necessary for the duke to take the field in person in considerable force, or that Groningen would be lost, and with it the Spanish forces in the province. He enclosed a memorial of the course proper to be adopted by the duke for his relief.[45]

Notwithstanding the strictness by which Philip had tied his great general's hands, Farnese felt the urgency of the situation.[46] By the end of June, accordingly, although full of his measures for marching to the relief of the Leaguers in Normandy, he moved into Gelderland, coming by way of Xanten, Rees, and neighbouring places. Here he paused for a moment perplexed, doubting whether to take the aggressive in Gelderland or to march straight to the relief of Groningen. He decided that it was better for the moment to protect the line of the Waal. Shipping his army accordingly into the Batavian Island or Good-meadow (Bet-uwe), which lies between

[44] Bor, III. xxviii. 566–569. Meteren, xvii. 298, 299. Reyd, ix. 169–172. Duyck, 25–34.

[45] Bor, *ubi sup.* 568.

[46] Bor, *ubi sup.* 570, *seqq.* Meteren, *ubi sup.*

the two great horns of the Rhine, he laid siege to Fort Knodsenburg, which Maurice had built the year before, on the right bank of the Waal for the purpose of attacking Nymegen. Farnese, knowing that the general of the States was occupied with his whole army far away to the north, and separated from him by two great rivers, wide and deep, and by the whole breadth of that dangerous district called the Foul-meadow (Vel-uwe), and by the vast quagmire known as the Rouvenian morass, which no artillery nor even any organised forces had ever traversed[47] since the beginning of the world, had felt no hesitation in throwing his army in boats across the Waal. He had no doubt of reducing a not very powerful fortress long before relief could be brought to it, and at the same time of disturbing by his presence in Batavia the combinations of his young antagonist in Friesland and Groningen.[48]

So with six thousand foot and one thousand horse,[49] Alexander came before Knodsenburg. The news reached Maurice at Steenwyk on the 15th July. Instantly changing his plans, the prince decided that Farnese must be faced at once, and, if possible, driven from the ground, thinking it more important to maintain, by concentration, that which had already been gained, than to weaken and diffuse his forces in insufficient attempts to acquire more. Before two days had passed, he was on the march southward, having left Lewis William with a sufficient force to threaten Groningen. Coming by way of Hasselt Zwol to Deventer, he crossed
18 July. 1591. the Yssel on a bridge of boats on the 18th of July, and proceeded to Arnhem.[50] His army, although excessively fatigued by forced marches in very hot weather, over nearly impassable roads, was full of courage and cheerfulness, having learned implicit confidence in their commander.
20 July. 22 July. On the 20th he was at Arnhem. On the 22nd his bridge of boats was made, and he had thrown his little

[47] Van der Kemp, i. 111.
[48] Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Parma to Philip, 24 July, 1591. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) [49] Parma's letter last cited. [50] Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

army across the Rhine into Batavia, and entrenched himself with his six thousand foot and fourteen hundred horse in the immediate neighbourhood of Farnese—Foul-meadow and Good-meadow, dyke, bog, wold, and quagmire, had been successfully traversed, and within one week of his learning that the great viceroy of Philip had reached the Batavian island, Maurice stood confronting that famous chieftain in battle-array.

On the 22nd July, Farnese, after firing two hundred and eighty-five shots at Fort Knodsenburg, ordered an assault, expecting that so trifling a work could hardly withstand a determined onslaught by his veterans. To his surprise they were so warmly received that two hundred of the assailants fell at the first onset, and the attack was most conclusively repulsed.[51] 22 July.

And now Maurice had appeared upon the scene, determined to relieve a place so important for his ulterior designs. On the 24th July he sent out a small but picked force of cavalry to reconnoitre the enemy. They were attacked by a considerable body of Italian and Spanish horse from the camp before Knodsenburg, including Alexander's own company of lancers under Nicelli. The States troops fled before them in apparent dismay for a little distance, hotly pursued by the royalists, until, making a sudden halt, they turned to the attack, accompanied by five fresh companies of cavalry and a thousand musketeers, who fell upon the foe from all directions. It was an ambush, which had been neatly prepared by Maurice in person, assisted by Sir Francis Vere. Sixty of the Spaniards and Italians were killed and one hundred and fifty prisoners, including Captain Nicelli, taken, while the rest of the party sought safety in ignominious flight.[52] This little skirmish, in which ten companies of the picked veterans of Alexander Farnese had thus been utterly routed before his eyes, did much to inspire the States troops with confidence in themselves and their leader.[53] 24 July, 1591.

[51] Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.*
[52] Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Groen v. Prinsterer. (Archives, II. S. i. 172.)
[53] Duyck, 38, 39. Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

Parma was too experienced a campaigner, and had too quick an eye, not to recognise the error which he had committed in placing the dangerous river Waal, without a bridge, between himself and his supplies. He had not dreamed that his antagonist would be capable of such celerity of movement as he had thus displayed, and his first business now was to extricate himself from a position which might soon become fatal. Without hesitation, he did his best to amuse the enemy in front of the fort, and then passed the night in planting batteries upon the banks of the river, under cover of which he succeeded next day in transporting in ferry-boats his whole force, artillery and baggage, to the opposite shore, without loss, and with his usual skill.[54]

He remained but a short time in Nymegen, but he was hampered by the express commands of the king. Moreover, his broken health imperatively required that he should once more seek the healing influence of the waters of Spa, before setting forth on his new French expedition. Meanwhile, although he had for a time protected the Spanish possessions in the north by his demonstration in Gelderland, it must be confessed that the diversion thus given to the plans of Maurice was but a feeble one.

Having assured the inhabitants of Nymegen that he would watch over the city like the apple of his eye,[55] he took his departure on the 4th of August for Spa. He was accompanied on his journey by his son, Prince Ranuccio, just arrived from Italy.

4 Aug.

After the retreat of Farnese, Maurice mustered his forces at Arnhem, and found himself at the head of seven thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse. It was expected by all the world that, being thus on the very spot, he would forthwith proceed to reduce the ancient, wealthy, imperial city of

[54] Duyck, 41. "We may thank God Almighty," says, under date of 27 July, the faithful journalist of these transactions, "that He has so guided our affairs that the Duke of Parma, whom hardly any cities or provinces could hitherto resist, and who therefore has usurped the title of the great Alexander, now with great shame and loss has been obliged to retreat from before the single fort of Knodsenburg." Compare Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Van der Kemp, i. 111. Coloma, iv. 74vo.

[55] Meteren, xvi. 299, 300.

Nymegen. The garrison and burghers accordingly made every preparation to resist the attack, disconcerted as they were, however, by the departure of Parma, and by the apparent incapacity of Verdugo to bring them effectual relief.

But to the surprise of all men, the States forces suddenly disappeared from the scene, having been, as it were, spirited away by night-time, along those silent watery highways and crossways of canal, river, and estuary—the military advantages of which to the Netherlands, Maurice was the first thoroughly to demonstrate. Having previously made great preparations of munitions and provisions in Zeeland, the young general, who was thought hard at work in Gelderland, suddenly presented himself, on the 19th September, before the gates of Hulst, on the border of Zeeland and Brabant. 19 Sept. It was a place of importance from its situation, its possession by the enemy being a perpetual thorn in the side of the States, and a constant obstacle to the plans of Maurice. His arrangements having been made with the customary neatness, celerity, and completeness, he received the surrender of the city on the fifth day after his arrival.[56] 24 Sept.

Its commander, Castillo, could offer no resistance, and was subsequently, it is said, beheaded by order of the Duke of Parma for his negligence.[57] The place is but a dozen miles from Antwerp, which city was at the very moment keeping great holiday and outdoing itself in magnificent festivals in honour of young Ranuccio.[58] The capture of Hulst before his eyes was a demonstration quite unexpected by the prince, and great was the wrath of old Mondragon, governor of Antwerp, thus bearded in his den. The veteran made immediate preparations for chastising the audacious Beggars of Zeeland and their pedantic young commander, but no sooner had the Spaniards taken the field than the wily foe had disappeared as magically as he had come.

[56] Meteren, *ubi sup.* Bor, *ubi sup.* 574. Duyck, 48–58.
[57] Meteren, *ubi sup.* [58] Ibid.

The Flemish earth seemed to have bubbles as the water hath, and while Mondragon was beating the air in vain on the margin of the Scheld, Maurice was back again upon the Waal, horse, foot, and artillery, bag, baggage, and munition, and had fairly set himself down in earnest to besiege Nymegen, before the honest burghers and the garrison had finished drawing long breaths at their recent escape. Between the 14th and 16th October he had bridged the deep, wide, and rapid river, had transported eight thousand five hundred infantry and sixteen companies of cavalry to the southern side, had entrenched his camp and made his approaches, and had got sixty-eight pieces of artillery into three positions commanding the weakest part of the defences of the city between the Falcon Tower and the Hoender gate.[59] The fort of Knodsenburg was also ready to throw hot shot across the river into the town. Not a detail in all these preparations escaped the vigilant eye of the Commander-in-Chief, and again and again was he implored not so recklessly to expose a life already become precious to his country. On the 20th October, Maurice sent to demand the surrender of the city. The reply was facetious but decisive.

14–16 Oct. 1591.

20 Oct.

The prince was but a young suitor, it was said, and the city a spinster not so lightly to be won. A longer courtship and more trouble would be necessary.[60]

Whereupon the suitor opened all his batteries without further delay, and the spinster gave a fresh example of the inevitable fate of talking castles and listening ladies.

Nymegen, despite her saucy answer on the 20th, surrendered on the 21st. Relief was impossible. Neither Parma, now on his way to France, nor Verdugo, shut up in Friesland, could come to the rescue of the place, and the combinations of Maurice were an inexorable demonstration.

21 Oct.

The terms of the surrender were similar to those accorded to Zutphen and Deventer. In regard to the religious point it was expressly laid down by Maurice that the demand for

[59] Meteren, xvi. 300. Bor, xxviii. 575. Duyck, 59–67. [60] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

permission to exercise publicly the Roman Catholic religion should be left to the decision of the States-General.[61]

And thus another most important city had been added to the domains of the republic. Another triumph was inscribed on the record of the young commander. The exultation was very great throughout the United Netherlands, and heartfelt was the homage rendered by all classes of his countrymen to the son of William the Silent.

Queen Elizabeth wrote to congratulate him in warmest terms on his great successes, and even the Spaniards began to recognise the merits of the new chieftain. An intercepted letter from Verdugo, who had been foiled in his efforts to arrest the career of Maurice, indicated great respect for his prowess. "I have been informed," said the veteran, "that Count Maurice of Nassau wishes to fight me. Had I the opportunity I assure you that I should not fail him, for even if ill luck were my portion, I should at least not escape the honour of being beaten by such a personage. I beg you to tell him so with my affectionate compliments. Yours, FRANCIS VERDUGO."[62]

These chivalrous sentiments towards Prince Maurice had not however prevented Verdugo from doing his best to assassinate Count Lewis William. Two Spaniards had been arrested in the States camp this summer, who came in as deserters, but who confessed "with little, or mostly without torture," that they had been sent by their governor and colonel with instructions to seize a favourable opportunity to shoot Lewis William and set fire to his camp. But such practices were so common on the part of the Spanish commanders as to occasion no surprise whatever.[63]

It will be remembered that two years before, the famous Martin Schenk had come to a tragic end at Nymegen.[64] He had been drowned, fished up, hanged, drawn, and quartered; after which his scattered fragments, having been exposed on all the principal towers of the city, had been put in pickle and deposited in a chest. They were now collected and

[61] Meteren, Bor, Duyck, *ubi sup.* Van der Kemp, i. 113.

[62] Bor, *ubi sup.* 578.

[63] Groen v. Prinsterer. (Archives, II. Serie i. 148.)

[64] Vol. II. of this work, chap. xx.

buried triumphantly in the tomb of the Dukes of Gelderland. Thus the shade of the grim freebooter was at last appeased.[65]

The government of the city was conferred upon Count Lewis William, with Gerard de Jonge as his lieutenant. A substantial garrison was placed in the city, and, the season being now far advanced, Maurice brought the military operations of the year, saving a slight preliminary demonstration against Gertruydenberg, to a close.[66] He had deserved and attained considerable renown. He had astonished the leisurely war-makers and phlegmatic veterans of the time, both among friends and foes, by the unexampled rapidity of his movements and the concentration of his attacks. He had carried great waggon trains and whole parks of siege artillery —the heaviest then known—over roads and swamps which had been deemed impassable even for infantry. He had traversed the length and breadth of the republic in a single campaign, taken two great cities in Overyssel, picked up cities and fortresses in the province of Groningen, and threatened its capital, menaced Steenwyk, relieved Knodsenburg though besieged in person by the greatest commander of the age, beaten the most famous cavalry of Spain and Italy under the eyes of their chieftain, swooped as it were through the air upon Brabant, and carried off an important city almost in the sight of Antwerp, and sped back again in the freezing weather of early autumn, with his splendidly served and invincible artillery, to the imperial city of Nymegen, which Farnese had sworn to guard like the apple of his eye, and which, with consummate skill, was forced out of his grasp in five days.

"Some might attribute these things to blind fortune," says an honest chronicler who had occupied important posts in the service of the prince and of his cousin Lewis William, "but they who knew the prince's constant study and laborious attention to detail, who were aware that he never committed to another what he could do himself, who saw his sobriety, vigilance, his perpetual study and holding of council with Count Lewis William (himself possessed of all these good

[65] Bor, *ubi sup.* [66] Bor, Meteren, Duyck, *ubi sup*

gifts, perhaps even in greater degree), and who never found him seeking, like so many other commanders, his own ease and comfort, would think differently." [67]

[67] Reyd, ix. 175.

It is indeed impossible to regard the simple, earnest, genial, valorous, and studious character of Lewis William without affection. His private letters are charming. In the intervals of his busy campaignings, he found time not only for his own studies, but also for superintending the education of his two younger brothers. It had at first been proposed that they should go to an English university, but old Count John objected to the expense, and to the luxurious habits which they would encounter there. He liked not the "mores" of the young English nobles, he said, while he denounced in vehement language the drunkenness and profligacy of the Germans. It was now decided that Count Lewis William should take charge of them himself: "As there is no good opportunity for them at Dillenburg," he wrote to his father, "and as the expense of Leyden seems too great, it is better that they should remain with me. Although living is very dear here, and my housekeeping is very hard upon me, yet are my young brothers, and their good education, on which their weal and woe depend, so dear to me that I will take charge of them with all my heart. In this case your grace will please send them a learned preceptor, and pay for his salary and for my brothers' clothing. For the rest I will provide; and I will myself be their tutor in reading and studying, in which I exercise myself as much as I have opportunity to do, and I will take them with me to the field whenever there is anything to see there, and anything going on against the enemy." Groen v. Prinsterer. (Archives, II. S. i. 149, 227, 131, 144.)

This was the stuff out of which the Nassaus were made. William the Silent and his three brethren had already laid down their lives for the commonwealth which he had founded, and now there were his son and nine more of the race in arms for its defence, or devoting all their energies and their means to emulate the example set them by their predecessors. Nor can I refrain in this connection from citing the noble language in which the patriarch of the Nassaus, Count John the Elder, urged upon his sons and nephews the necessity of establishing a system of common schools in the United Provinces—an institution which, when adopted in that commonwealth, became a source of incalculable good, and which, transplanted in the next generation by English pilgrims from Leyden to Massachusetts, and vastly developed in the virgin soil of America, has long been the chief safeguard and the peculiar glory of our own republic. "You must urge upon the States-General," said the only surviving brother of William the Silent, "that they, according to the example of the Pope and the Jesuits, should establish free schools where children of quality as well as of poor families, for a very small sum, could be well and christianly educated and brought up. This would be the greatest and most useful work, and the highest service that you could ever accomplish for God and Christianity, and especially for the Netherlands themselves. . . . In summa, one may jeer at this as popish trickery, and undervalue it as one will, there still remains in the work an inexpressible benefit. *Soldiers and patriots thus educated, with a true knowledge of God and a Christian conscience: item, churches and schools, good libraries, books and printing-presses, are better than all armies, arsenals, armouries, munitions, alliances, and treaties that can be had or imagined in the world.* . . . . Pray urge upon his Grace (Prince Maurice), in cousinly and friendly manner, that he should not shrink from nor find shame or difficulty in these things, nor cease, under invocation of Divine aid, from reflecting on them, and furthering them with earnest diligence." Groen v. Prinsterer. (Archives, II. S. i. Letter 95, p 210 *seqq.*)

CHAPTER XXV.

War in Brittany and Normandy — Death of La Noue — Religious and political persecution in Paris — Murder of President Brisson, Larcher, and Tardif — The sceptre of France offered to Philip — The Duke of Mayenne punishes the murderers of the magistrates — Speech of Henry's envoy to the States-General — Letter of Queen Elizabeth to Henry — Siege of Rouen — Farnese leads an army to its relief — The king is wounded in a skirmish — Siege of Rue by Farnese — Henry raises the siege of Rouen — Siege of Caudebec — Critical position of Farnese and his army — Victory of the Duke of Mercœur in Brittany.

AGAIN the central point towards which the complicated events to be described in this history gravitate is found on the soil of France. Movements apparently desultory and disconnected—as they may have seemed to the contemporaneous observer, necessarily occupied with the local and daily details which make up individual human life—are found to be necessary parts of a whole, when regarded with that breadth and clearness of vision which is permitted to human beings only when they can look backward upon that long sequence of events which make up the life of nations and which we call the Past. It is only by the anatomical study of what has ceased to exist that we can come thoroughly to comprehend the framework and the vital conditions of that which lives. It is only by patiently lifting the shroud from the Past that we can enable ourselves to make even wide guesses at the meaning of the dim Present and the veiled Future. It is only thus that the continuity of human history reveals itself to us as the most important of scientific facts.

If ever commonwealth was apparently doomed to lose that national existence which it had maintained for a brief period at the expense of infinite sacrifice of blood and treasure, it was the republic of the United Netherlands in the period immediately succeeding the death of William the Silent. Domestic

treason, secession of important provinces, religious hatred, foreign intrigue, and foreign invasion—in such a sea of troubles was the republic destined generations long to struggle. Who but the fanatical, the shallow-minded, or the corrupt could doubt the inevitable issue of the conflict? Did not great sages and statesmen whose teachings seemed so much wiser in their generation than the untaught impulses of the great popular heart, condemn over and over again the hopeless struggles and the atrocious bloodshed which were thought to disgrace the age, and by which it was held impossible that the cause of human liberty should ever be advanced?

To us who look back from the vantage summit which humanity has reached—thanks to the toil and sacrifices of those who have preceded us—it may seem doubtful whether a premature peace in the Netherlands, France, and England would have been an unmitigated blessing, however easily it might have been purchased by the establishment all over Europe of that holy institution called the Inquisition, and by the tranquil acceptance of the foreign domination of Spain.

If, too, ever country seemed destined to the painful process of national vivisection and final dismemberment, it was France. Its natural guardians and masters, save one, were in secret negotiation with foreign powers to obtain with their assistance a portion of the national territory under acknowledgment of foreign supremacy. There was hardly an inch of French soil that had not two possessors. In Burgundy Baron Biron was battling against the Viscount Tavannes; in the Lyonese and Dauphiny Marshal des Digueres was fighting with the Dukes of Savoy and Nemours; in Provence, Epernon was resisting Savoy; in Languedoc, Constable Montmorency contended with the Duke of Joyeuse; in Brittany, the Prince of Dombes was struggling with the Duke of Mercœur.

But there was one adventurer who thought he could show a better legal title to the throne of France than all the doctors of the Sorbonne could furnish to Philip II. and his daughter, and who still trusted, through all the disasters which pursued

him, and despite the machinations of venal warriors and mendicant princes, to his good right and his good sword, and to something more potent than both, the cause of national unity. His rebuke to the intriguing priests at the interview of St. Denis, and his reference to the judgment of Solomon, formed the text to his whole career.

The brunt of the war now fell upon Brittany and Normandy. Three thousand Spaniards under Don John de Aquila had landed in the port of Blavet which they had fortified, as a stronghold on the coast.[1] And thither, to defend the integrity of that portion of France, which, in Spanish hands, was a perpetual menace to her realm, her crown, even to her life, Queen Elizabeth had sent some three thousand Englishmen, under commanders well known to France and the Netherlands. There was black Norris again dealing death among the Spaniards and renewing his perpetual squabbles with Sir Roger Williams. There was that doughty Welshman himself, truculent and caustic as ever and as ready with sword or pen, foremost in every mad adventure or every forlorn hope, criticising with sharpest tongue the blunders and shortcomings of friend and foe, and devoting the last drop in his veins with chivalrous devotion to his Queen. "The world cannot deny," said he, "that any carcase living ventured himself freer and oftener for his prince, state, and friends than I did mine. There is no more to be had of a poor beast than his skin, and for want of other means I never respected mine in the least respect towards my sovereign's service, or country."[2] And so passing his life in the saddle

[1] Coloma, iv. 61vo.

[2] Williams to Burghley, Feb. 15, 1592. (S. P. Office MS.)

A most brilliant combat had recently occurred before Dieppe, in which Sir Roger, at the head of six hundred men—four hundred of them English—had attacked two full regiments of the League in their entrenchments, and routed them utterly, with the loss of five hundred killed and wounded, four hundred prisoners, and sustaining but little loss himself. The achievement seems an extraordinary one, but is vouched for by the Governor of Dieppe, on whose authority it was communicated by the French ambassador in London to the Queen: "Glory to God and to the said Sir Williams," said the ambassador, "who has not belied by this action the good opinion that all good people of both nations had of him this long time, and has shown us that the English of our day have not degenerated from the ancient virtue of their fathers." Beau-

and under fire, yet finding leisure to collect the materials for, and to complete the execution of, one of the most valuable and attractive histories of the age, the bold Welshman again and again appears, wearing the same humorous but truculent aspect that belonged to him when he was wont to run up and down in a great morion and feathers on Flemish battle-fields, a mark for the Spanish sharp-shooters.

There, too, under the banner of the Béarnese, that other historian of those sanguiuary times, who had fought on almost every battle-field where tyranny and liberty had sought to smite each other dead, on French or Flemish soil, and who

voir la Nocle to Burghley, May 24, 1591. (S. P. Office MS.)

No one gave better or blunter advice to both Queen and King than this hard-fighting, sharp-writing Welshman. No one insisted more earnestly than he did on the entire union in interest and danger of Elizabeth, Henry, and the Dutch Republic; and that every battle gained in Brittany, Normandy, or the Netherlands, was a blow struck in immediate defence of England's very existence.—"Therefore, Sacred Majesty," wrote Williams, "if you can, help the King to take Rouen. If he be in Rouen, your Majesty may be assured this king is on his horseback in such sort that all Spain and their confederators will shake and dare think on nothing else but how to prevent him. Then shall he be well able to maintain himself, and your Majesty's purse be well spared, but doth he not take Rouen, and the Spaniards enter into these parts, as Villars and Tavannes doth demand them, then be assured all the charges of these wars must be on your Majesty, for the poor king shall not be able to pay 500 soldiers. If he should be beaten, be assured in few months to fight for the English ports, in such sort that I pray God I may never see it. I fear I angered the king. If he be doing me right, your Majesty and the world found me ever his servant to the uttermost of my power. I found him sometimes speaking he would besiege Pontoise, sometimes Sancy in Champagne, and how he should join with the Almayn army. Besides other speeches, although not flattering, I am assured honest, I told his Majesty, Sir, if you will have the world to confess you as great a captain as yourself, and all we here think you to be, you must recover or at least save your seaports, rather than those bicocques, or places of small importance in respect of them, else your best friends will despair of your government, and in short time not able to succour you for want of ports to land your necessaries." Williams to the Queen, from Dieppe, 4 June 1591. (S. P. Office MS.)

And again:—"Doth the king prosper, your Majesty and estate must needs flourish, for the wars will rest all on him. Doth he decay, your Majesty must needs maintain his wars, or in a short time fight of yourself, not only against the Spanish, but against all the League, the which will increase daily, for all the mercenaries will follow the fortunate, I mean the victorious. Doth the Spanish ruin this king, Holland and Zeeland will be found good cheap, and England in that case I pray God never to see it. Therefore, most sacred Sovereign, a penny to save a pound is well bestowed, and to ruin a suburb to save a city is done to good purpose. My meaning is better to spend part of your wealth and subjects than to hazard the whole. This king is on making or marring, resolving only on your Majesty's succour. Having it, he doubts nothing to take Rouen." Williams to the Queen, 9 June, 1591. (S. P. Office MS.)

had prepared his famous political and military discourses in a foul dungeon swarming with toads and rats and other villainous reptiles to which the worse than infernal tyranny of Philip II. had consigned him for seven years long as a prisoner of war—the brave and good La Noue, with the iron arm, hero of a hundred combats, was fighting his last fight. At the siege of Lamballe in Brittany, he had taken off his casque and climbed a ladder to examine the breach effected by the batteries. An arquebus shot from the town grazed his forehead, and, without inflicting a severe wound, stunned him so much that he lost his balance and fell head foremost towards the ground ; his leg, which had been wounded at the midnight assault upon Paris, where he stood at the side of King Henry, caught in the ladder and held him suspended. His head was severely bruised, and the contusions and shock to his war-worn frame were so great that he died after lingering eighteen days.

His son de Teligny, who in his turn had just been exchanged and released from the prison where he had lain since his capture before Antwerp, had hastened with joy to join his father in the camp, but came to close his eyes. The veteran caused the chapter in Job on the resurrection of the body to be read to him on his death-bed, and died expressing his firm faith in a hereafter. Thus passed away, at the age of sixty, on the 4th August, 1591, one of the most heroic spirits of France. Prudence, courage, experience, military knowledge both theoretic and practical, made him one of the first captains of the age, and he was not more distinguished for his valour than for the purity of his life, and the moderation, temperance, and justice of his character.[3] The Prince of Dombes, in despair at his death, raised the siege of Lamballe.

There was yet another chronicler, fighting among the Spaniards, now in Brittany, now in Normandy, and now in Flanders, and doing his work as thoroughly with his sword as afterwards with his pen, Don Carlos Coloma, captain of

[3] De Thou, t. xi. lib. 97, pp. 397, 398.

cavalry, afterwards financier, envoy, and historian. For it was thus that those writers prepared themselves for their work. They were all actors in the great epic, the episodes of which they have preserved. They lived and fought, and wrought and suffered and wrote. Rude in tongue, aflame with passion, twisted all awry by prejudice, violent in love and hate, they have left us narratives which are at least full of colour and thrilling with life.

Thus Netherlanders, Englishmen, and Frenchmen were again mingling their blood and exhausting their energies on a hundred petty battle-fields of Brittany and Normandy ; but perhaps to few of those hard fighters was it given to discern the great work which they were slowly and painfully achieving.

In Paris the League still maintained its ascendancy. Henry, having again withdrawn from his attempts to reduce the capital, had left the sixteen tyrants who governed it more leisure to occupy themselves with internal politics. A network of intrigue was spread through the whole atmosphere of the place. The Sixteen, sustained by the power of Spain and Rome, and fearing nothing so much as the return of peace, by which their system of plunder would come to an end, proceeded with their persecution of all heretics, real or supposed, who were rich enough to offer a reasonable chance of spoil. The soul of all these intrigues was the new legate, Sega, bishop of Piacenza. Letters from him to Alexander Farnese, intercepted by Henry, showed a determination to ruin the Duke of Mayenne and Count Belin governor of Paris, whom he designated as Colossus and Renard, to extirpate the magistrates, and to put Spanish partizans in their places, and in general to perfect the machinery by which the authority of Philip was to be established in France. He was perpetually urging upon that monarch the necessity of spending more money among his creatures in order to carry out these projects.[4]

Accordingly the attention of the Sixteen had been di-

[4] De Thou, 438, 439.

rected to President Brisson, who had already made himself so dangerously conspicuous by his resistance to the insolent assumption of the cardinal-legate. This eminent juris-consult had succeeded Pomponne de Bellievre as first president of the Parliament of Paris. He had been distinguished for talent, learning, and eloquence as an advocate, and was the author of several important legal works. His ambition to fill the place of first president had caused him to remain in Paris after its revolt against Henry III. He was no Leaguer, and, since his open defiance of the ultra-Catholic party, he had been a marked man—doomed secretly by the confederates who ruled the capital. He had fondly imagined that he could govern the Parisian populace as easily as he had been in the habit of influencing the Parliament or directing his clients. He expected to restore the city to its obedience to the constituted authorities. He hoped to be himself the means of bringing Henry IV. in triumph to the throne of his ancestors. He found, however, that a revolution was more difficult to manage than a law case, and that the confederates of the Holy League were less tractable than his clients had usually been found.

On the night of the 14th November, 1591, he was seized on the bridge St. Michel, while on his way to Parliament, and was told that he was expected at the Hotel de Ville. He was then brought to the prison of the little Châtelet.

14 Nov. 1591.

Hardly had he been made secure in the dimly-lighted dungeon, when Cromé, a leader among the Parisian populace, made his appearance, accompanied by some of his confederates, and dressed in a complete suit of mail. He ordered the magistrate to take off his hat and to kneel. He then read a sentence condemning him to death. Profoundly astonished, Brisson demanded to know of what crime he was accused, and under what authority. The answer was a laugh, and an assurance that he had no time to lose. He then begged that at least he might be imprisoned long enough to enable him to complete a legal work on which he was engaged, and which,

by his premature death, would be lost to the commonwealth. This request produced no doubt more merriment than his previous demands. His judges were inflexible, and allowed him hardly time to confess himself. He was then hanged in his dungeon.[5]

Two other magistrates, Larcher and Tardif, were executed in the same way, in the same place, and on the same night. The crime charged against them was having spoken in a public assembly somewhat freely against the Sixteen, and having aided in the circulation in Paris of a paper drawn up by the Duke of Nevers, filled with bitterness against the Lorraine princes and the League, and addressed to the late Pope Sixtus.[6]

The three bodies were afterwards gibbeted on the Grève in front of the Hotel de Ville, and exposed for two days to the insults and fury of the populace.

This was the culminating point of the reign of terror in Paris. Never had the sixteen tyrants, lords of the market-halls, who governed the capital by favour of and in the name of the populace, seemed more omnipotent. As representatives or plenipotentiaries of Madam League they had laid the crown at the feet of the King of Spain, hoping by still further drafts on his exchequer and his credulity to prolong indefinitely their own ignoble reign. The extreme democratic party, which had hitherto supported the House of Lorraine, and had seemed to idolize that family in the person of the great Balafré, now believed themselves possessed of sufficient power to control the Duke of Mayenne and all his adherents. They sent the Jesuit Claude Mathieu with a special memorial to Philip II. That monarch was implored to take the sceptre of France, and to reign over them, inasmuch as they most willingly threw themselves into his arms.[7] They assured him that all reasonable people, and especially the Holy League, wished him to take the reins of Government, on condition of

[5] De Thou, 442, 443.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Arch. de Simancas (Paris) B. 71, $\frac{124}{}$, cited by Capefigue, Hist. de la Ligue, &c. vi. 64, *seqq.*

exterminating heresy throughout the kingdom by force of arms, of publishing the Council of Trent, and of establishing everywhere the Holy Inquisition—an institution formidable only to the wicked and desirable for the good. It was suggested that Philip should not call himself any longer King of Spain nor adopt the title of King of France, but that he should proclaim himself the Great King, or make use of some similar designation, not indicating any specialty but importing universal dominion.

Should Philip, however, be disinclined himself to accept the monarchy, it was suggested that the young Duke of Guise, son of the first martyr of France, would be the most appropriate personage to be honoured with the hand of the legitimate Queen of France, the Infanta Clara Isabella.

But the Sixteen were reckoning without the Duke of Mayenne. That great personage, although an indifferent warrior and an utterly unprincipled and venal statesman, was by no means despicable as a fisherman in the troubled waters of revolution. He knew how to manage intrigues with both sides for his own benefit. Had he been a bachelor he might have obtained the Infanta and shared her prospective throne. Being encumbered with a wife he had no hope of becoming the son-in-law of Philip, and was determined that his nephew Guise should not enjoy a piece of good fortune denied to himself. The escape of the young duke from prison had been the signal for the outbreak of jealousies between uncle and nephew, which Parma and other agents had been instructed by their master to foster to the utmost. "They must be maintained in such disposition in regard to me," he said, "that the one being ignorant of my relations to the other, both may without knowing it do my will." [10]

But Mayenne, in this grovelling career of self-seeking, in this perpetual loading of dice and marking of cards, which formed the main occupation of so many kings and princes of

[9] Arch. de Simancas (Paris) B. 72, $\frac{13\text{-}16}{}$. Ibid. p. 123.

[10] Arch. de Simancas (Paris) 57, $\frac{503}{}$, cited by Capefigue, vi. 193.

the period, and which passed for Machiavellian politics, was a fair match for the Spanish king and his Italian viceroy. He sent President Jeannin on special mission to Philip, asking for two armies, one to be under his command, the other under that of Farnese, and assured him that he should be king himself, or appoint any man he liked to the vacant throne. Thus he had secured one hundred thousand crowns a month to carry on his own game withal. "The maintenance of these two armies costs me 261,000 crowns a month," said Philip to his envoy Ybarra.[11]

And what was the result of all this expenditure of money, of all this lying and counter-lying, of all this frantic effort on the part of the most powerful monarch of the age to obtain property which did not belong to him—the sovereignty of a great kingdom, stocked with a dozen millions of human beings—of all this endless bloodshed of the people in the interests of a high-born family or two, of all this infamous brokerage charged by great nobles for their attempts to transfer kingdoms like private farms from one owner to another? Time was to show. Meanwhile men trembled at the name of Philip II., and grovelled before him as the incarnation of sagacity, high policy, and king-craft.

But Mayenne, while taking the brokerage, was less anxious about the transfer. He had fine instinct enough to suspect that the Béarnese, outcast though he seemed, might after all not be playing so desperate a game against the League as it was the fashion to suppose. He knew whether or not Henry was likely to prove a more fanatical Huguenot in 1592 than he had shown himself twenty years before at the Bartholomew festival. And he had wit enough to foresee that the "instruction" which the gay free-thinker held so cautiously in his fingers might perhaps turn out the trump card. A bold, valorous Frenchman with a flawless title, and washed whiter than snow by the freshet of holy water, might prove a more formidable claimant to the allegiance of Frenchmen than a

[11] Ibid. 57, $\frac{366}{—}$, ibid

foreign potentate, even though backed by all the doctors of the Sorbonne.

The murder of President Brisson and his colleagues by the confederates of the sixteen quarters, was in truth the beginning of the end. What seemed a proof of supreme power was the precursor of a counter-revolution, destined ere long to lead farther than men dreamed. The Sixteen believed themselves omnipotent. Mayenne being in their power, it was for them to bestow the crown at their will, or to hold it suspended in air as long as seemed best to them. They felt no doubt that all the other great cities in the kingdom would follow the example of Paris.

But the lieutenant-general of the realm felt it time for him to show that his authority was not a shadow—that he was not a pasteboard functionary like the deceased cardinal-king, Charles X. The letters entrusted by the Sixteen to Claude Mathieu were intercepted by Henry, and, very probably, an intimation of their contents was furnished to Mayenne. At any rate, the duke, who lacked not courage nor promptness when his own interests were concerned, who felt his authority slipping away from him, now that it seemed the object of the Spaniards to bind the democratic party to themselves by a complicity in crime, hastened at once to Paris, determined to crush these intrigues and to punish the murderers of the judges.[12] The Spanish envoy Ybarra, proud, excitable, violent, who had been privy to the assassinations, and was astonished that the deeds had excited indignation and fury instead of the terror counted upon, remonstrated with Mayenne, intimating that in times of civil commotion it was often necessary to be blind and deaf.

In vain. The duke carried it with a high and firm hand. 4 Dec. 1591. He arrested the ringleaders, and hanged four of them in the basement of the Louvre within twenty days after the commission of their crime. The energy was well-timed and perfectly successful. The power of the Sixteen was struck to the earth at a blow. The ignoble tyrants became

[12] De Thou, xi. 446.

in a moment as despicable as they had been formidable and insolent. Cromé, more fortunate than many of his fellows, contrived to make his escape out of the kingdom.[13]

Thus Mayenne had formally broken with the democratic party, so called—with the market-halls oligarchy. In thus doing, his ultimate rupture with the Spaniards was foreshadowed. The next combination for him to strive for would be one to unite the moderate catholics and the Béarnese. Ah ! if Henry would but "instruct" himself out of hand, what a game the duke might play !

The burgess-party, the mild royalists, the disgusted portion of the Leaguers, coalescing with those of the Huguenots whose fidelity might prove stanch even against the religious apostasy contemplated by their chief—this combination might prove an over-match for the ultra-leaguers, the democrats, and the Spaniards. The king's name would be a tower of strength for that "third party," which began to rear its head very boldly and to call itself "Politica." Madam League might succumb to this new rival in the fickle hearts of the French.

At the beginning of the year 1591, Buzanval had presented his credentials to the States-General at the Hague 26 Jan. as envoy of Henry IV. In the speech which he 1591. made on this occasion he expressed the hope that the mission of the Viscount Turenne, his Majesty's envoy to England and to the Netherlands, had made known the royal sentiments towards the States and the great satisfaction of the king with their energetic sympathy and assistance. It was notorious, said Buzanval, that the King of Spain for many years had been governed by no other motive than to bring all the rest of Christendom under his dominion, while at the same time he forced upon those already placed under his sceptre a violent tyranny, passing beyond all the bounds that God, nature, and reason had set to lawful forms of government. In regard to nations born under other laws than his, he had used the pretext of religion for reducing them to servitude. The wars stirred up

[13] De Thou, xi. 447, 448.

by his family in Germany, and his recent invasion of England, were proofs of this intention, still fresh in the memory of all men. Still more flagrant were his machinations in the present troubles of France. Of his dealings with his hereditary realms, the condition of the noble provinces of the Netherlands, once so blooming under reasonable laws, furnished a sufficient illustration. You see, my masters, continued the envoy, the subtle plans of the Spanish king and his counsellors to reach with certainty the object of their ambition. They have reflected that Spain, which is the outermost corner of Europe, cannot conveniently make war upon other Christian realms. They have seen that a central position is necessary to enable them to stretch their arms to every side. They have remembered that princes who in earlier days were able to spread their wings over all Christendom had their throne in France, like Charles the Great and his descendants. Therefore the king is now earnestly bent on seizing this occasion to make himself master of France. The death of the late king (Henry III.) had no sooner occurred, than—as the blood through great terror rushes from the extremities and overflows the heart—they here also, fearing to lose their opportunity and astonished at the valour of our present king, abandoned all their other enterprises in order to pour themselves upon France.[14]

Buzanval further reminded the States that Henry had received the most encouraging promises from the protestant princes of Germany, and that so great a personage as the Viscount Turenne, who had now gone thither to reap the fruit of those promises, would not have been sent on such a mission except that its result was certain. The Queen of England, too, had promised his Majesty most liberal assistance.

It was not necessary to argue as to the close connection between the cause of the Netherlands and that of France. The king had beaten down the mutiny of his own subjects, and repulsed the invasion of the Dukes of Savoy and of Lorraine. In consideration of the assistance promised by Germany and England—for a powerful army would be at the

[14] Bor, III. xxviii. 551, 552.

command of Henry in the spring—it might be said that the Netherlands might repose for a time and recruit their exhausted energies, under the shadow of these mighty preparations.[15]

"I do not believe, however," said the minister, "that you will all answer me thus. The faint-hearted and the inexperienced might flatter themselves with such thoughts, and seek thus to cover their cowardice, but the zealous and the courageous will see that it is time to set sail on the ship, now that the wind is rising so freshly and favourably.

"For there are many occasions when an army might be ruined for want of twenty thousand crowns. What a pity if a noble edifice, furnished to the roof-tree, should fall to decay for want of a few tiles. No doubt your own interests are deeply connected with our own. Men may say that our proposals should be rejected on the principle that the shirt is nearer to the skin than the coat, but it can be easily proved that our cause is one. The mere rumour of this army will prevent the Duke of Parma from attacking you. His forces will be drawn to France. He will be obliged to intercept the crash of this thunderbolt. The assistance of this army is worth millions to you, and has cost you nothing. To bring France into hostility with Spain is the very policy that you have always pursued and always should pursue in order to protect your freedom. You have always desired a war between France and Spain, and here is a fierce and cruel one in which you have hazarded nothing. It cannot come to an end without bringing signal advantages to yourselves.

"You have always desired an alliance with a French sovereign, and here is a firm friendship offered you by our king, a natural alliance.

"You know how unstable are most treaties that are founded on shifting interests, and do not concern the freedom of bodies and souls. The first are written with pen upon paper, and are generally as light as paper. They have no roots in the heart. Those founded on mutual assistance on trying occa-

[15] Bor, III. xxviii. 551, 552

sions have the perpetual strength of nature. They bring always good and enduring fruit in a rich soil like the heart of our king; that heart which is as beautiful and as pure from all untruth as the lily upon his shield.

"You will derive the first profits from the army thus raised. From the moment of its mustering under a chief of such experience as Turenne, it will absorb the whole attention of Spain, and will draw her thoughts from the Netherlands to France."

All this and more in the same earnest manner did the envoy urge upon the consideration of the States-General, concluding with a demand of 100,000 florins as their contribution towards the French campaign.[16]

His eloquence did not fall upon unwilling ears; for the States-General, after taking time to deliberate, replied to the propositions by an expression of the strongest sympathy with, and admiration for, the heroic efforts of the King of France. Accordingly, notwithstanding their own enormous expenses, past and present, and their strenuous exertions at that very moment to form an army of foot and horse for the campaign, the brilliant results of which have already been narrated, they agreed to furnish the required loan of 100,000 florins to be repaid in a year, besides six or seven good ships of war to co-operate with the fleets of England and France upon the coasts of Normandy.[17] And the States were even better than their word.

9 May, 1591.

Before the end of autumn of the year 1591, Henry had laid siege to Rouen, then the second city of the kingdom. To leave much longer so important a place—dominating, as it did, not only Normandy but a principal portion of the maritime borders of France—under the control of the League and of Spain was likely to be fatal to Henry's success. It was perfectly sound in Queen Elizabeth to insist as she did, with more than her usual imperiousness towards her excellent brother, that he should lose no more time before reducing that city. It was obvious that Rouen in the hands

[16] Bor, III. xxviii. 551, 552.

[17] Ibid. 552, 553.

of her arch-enemy was a perpetual menace to the safety of her own kingdom. It was therefore with correct judgment, as well as with that high-flown gallantry so dear to the heart of Elizabeth, that her royal champion and devoted slave assured her of his determination no longer to defer obeying her commands in this respect.

The queen had repeatedly warned him of the necessity of defending the maritime frontier of his kingdom, and she was not sparing of her reproaches that the large sums which she expended in his cause had been often ill bestowed. Her criticisms on what she considered his military mistakes were not few, her threats to withdraw her subsidies frequent. "Owning neither the East nor the West Indies," she said, "we are unable to supply the constant demands upon us; and although we have the reputation of being a good housewife, it does not follow that we can be a housewife for all the world."[18] She was persistently warning the king of an attack upon Dieppe, and rebuking him for occupying himself with petty enterprises to the neglect of vital points. She expressed her surprise that after the departure of Parma, he had not driven the Spaniards out of Brittany, without allowing them to fortify themselves in that country. "I am astonished," she said to him, "that your eyes are so blinded as not to see this danger. Remember, my dear brother," she frankly added, "that it is not only France that I am aiding, nor are my own natural realms of little consequence to me. Believe me, if I see that you have no more regard to the ports and maritime places nearest to us, it will be necessary that my prayers should serve you in place of any other assistance, because it does not please me to send my people to the shambles where they may perish before having rendered you any assistance. I am sure the Spaniards will soon besiege Dieppe. Beware of it, and excuse my bluntness, for if in the beginning you had taken the maritime forts, which are the very gates of your kingdom, Paris would not have been so well furnished, and other places nearer the heart of the

[18] Queen to the Duke d'Espernon, 19 Feb. 1592. (S. P. Office MS.)

kingdom would not have received so much foreign assistance, without which the others would have soon been vanquished. Pardon my simplicity as belonging to my own sex wishing to give a lesson to one who knows better, but my experience in government makes me a little obstinate in believing that I am not ignorant of that which belongs to a king, and I persuade myself that in following my advice you will not fail to conquer your assailants."[19]

Before the end of the year Henry had obtained control of the Seine, both above and below the city, holding Pont de l'Arche on the north—where was the last bridge across the river; that of Rouen, built by the English when they governed Normandy, being now in ruins—and Caudebec on the south in an iron grasp. Several war-vessels sent by the Hollanders, according to the agreement with Buzanval, cruised in the north of the river below Caudebec, and rendered much service to the king in cutting off supplies from the beleaguered place, while the investing army of Henry, numbering twenty-five thousand foot—inclusive of the English contingent, and three thousand Netherlanders—and ten thousand cavalry, nearly all French, was fast reducing the place to extremities.

Parma, as usual, in obedience to his master's orders, but

[19] Queen to the King of France, 7 March, 1592. (S. P. Office MS. in French, in her own hand.) "The poor king," said Umton, "must be miraculously defended by God, or else he cannot long subsist. He wanteth means and has need of miracles, and without her Majesty's upholding would quickly perish. She only giveth life to his actions and terror to his enemies." To Burghley, from Dieppe, 15 March, 1592. (S. P. Office MS.)

"Knowing," said Sir Robert Cecil, "that no place in all France, no, not Paris itself, was of more importance to be recovered than Rouen and Newhaven, the Queen levied and sent over troops with such speed as the like has seldom been seen, being performed within twenty days, sending also a nobleman of her own realm to conduct them, but how contrarily the King took another course to seek other towns and places, and to permit her M.'s forces to remain about Dieppe almost two months without any use but to spend her M.'s money, and to waste her people, and instead of besieging of Rouen, suffered it to be victualled, manned, and fortified in such sort as experience hath taught the King how difficult, or rather how desperate, it hath been as yet to recover it. . . . . And of this error hath followed the opportunity of the Duke of Parma's entering with so mighty an army, and the King's professed disability to fight with him." Mr. Wilkes's Instructions to the French King; the whole in Sir R. Cecil's handwriting; 19 March, 1592. (S. P. Office MS.)

entirely against his own judgment, had again left the rising young general of the Netherlands to proceed from one triumph to another, while he transferred beyond the borders of that land which it was his first business to protect, the whole weight of his military genius and the better portion of his well-disciplined forces.

Most bitterly and indignantly did he express himself, both at the outset and during the whole progress of the expedition, concerning the utter disproportions between the king's means and aims. The want of money was the cause of wholesale disease, desertion, mutiny, and death in his slender army. Such great schemes as his master's required, as he perpetually urged, liberality of expenditure and measures of breadth. He protested that he was not to blame for the ruin likely to come upon the whole enterprise. He had besought, remonstrated, reasoned with the king in vain. He had seen his beard first grow, he said, in the king's service, and he had grown gray in that service, but rather than be kept longer in such a position, without money, men, or means to accomplish the great purposes on which he was sent, he protested that he would abandon his office and retire into the woods to feed on roots.[20] Repeatedly did he implore his master for a large and powerful army; for money and again money. The royal plans should be enforced adequately or abandoned entirely. To spend money in small sums, as heretofore, was only throwing it into the sea.[21]

It was deep in the winter however before he could fairly come to the rescue of the besieged city. Towards the end of January, 1592, he moved out of Hainault, and once more made his junction at Guise with the Duke of Mayenne. At a review of his forces on 16th January, 1592, Alexander found himself at the head of thirteen thousand five hundred and sixteen infantry and four thousand and sixty-one cavalry. The Duke of Mayenne's army, for payment of which that personage received from Philip 100,000

January, 1592.

[20] Parma to Philip, 11 March, 1592. "Que antes me determinaria a reco germe en un bosque á comer raices." (Arch. de Simancas MS.) [21] Ibid.

dollars a month, besides 10,000 dollars a month for his own pocket, ought to have numbered ten thousand foot and three thousand horse, according to contract, but was in reality much less.[22]

The Duke of Montemarciano, nephew of Gregory XIV., had brought two thousand Swiss, furnished by the pontiff to the cause of the League, and the Duke of Lorraine had sent his kinsmen, the Counts Chaligny and Vaudemont, with a force of seven hundred lancers and cuirassiers.[23]

The town of Fère was assigned in pledge to Farnese to hold as a convenient mustering-place and station in proximity to his own borders, and, as usual, the chief command over the united armies was placed in his hands. These arrangements concluded, the allies moved slowly forward much in the same

[22] From a statement in the Archives of Simancas, dated 25 Nov. 1591, it appears that the force called the "greater army of France" (el ejercito mayor de Francia), provided by Philip, and under command of Farnese, was composed of—

Infantry	23,512	Costing per month	$115,981
Cavalry	4,969	„ „	44,505
Other expenses of the army, including $12,629 per month for artillery; salaries, of which the Duke of Parma's was $3600 per month, and other contingencies		„ „	42,321
Besides a large monthly sum for secret military service.			
Thus the whole force was ..	28,481	men, costing per month	$202,807
But there were 7681 wanting to the number determined upon, which added would give total of	7,681		
	36,162	men, costing per month	$250,871
The force included—of Spanish infantry			6,078 men.
German „			11,518 „

The rest being Walloons and Italians.

The lesser army of France (ejercito menor de Francia) was stated at—

10,000 foot	costing per month	$49,912
3,000 horse	„ „	49,750
Total		99,662,

and was commanded by the Duke of Mayenne, but paid by the King of Spain.

To the Duke of Mayenne, *in person*, according to order, $10,000 per month. —("A la persona del Duque de Umena conforme la orden.")

The total of the King's army in the Netherlands was stated at 29,233 men, at a monthly cost of $149,187; but there was a large number wanting. The total force of the three armies paid for by Philip was intended to be 86,561 men, at a monthly cost of $542,428.

[23] De Thou, t. xi. 452, *seqq.* Bentivoglio, P. II. lib. vi. p. 356–369.

order as in the previous year. The young Duke of Guise, who had just made his escape from the prison of Tours, where he had been held in durance since the famous assassination of his father and uncle, and had now come to join his uncle Mayenne, led the vanguard. Ranuccio, son of the duke, rode also in the advance, while two experienced commanders, Vitry and De la Châtre, as well as the famous Marquis del Vasto, formerly general of cavalry in the Netherlands, who had been transferred to Italy but was now serving in the League's army as a volunteer, were associated with the young princes. Parma, Mayenne, and Montemarciano rode in the battalia, the rear being under command of the Duke of Aumale and the Count Chaligny. Wings of cavalry protected the long trains of wagons which were arranged on each flank of the invading army. The march was very slow, it being Farnese's uniform practice to guard himself scrupulously against any possibility of surprise and to entrench himself thoroughly at nightfall.[24]

By the middle of February they reached the vicinity of Aumale in Picardy. Meantime Henry, on the news of the advance of the relieving army, had again the same problem to solve that had been presented to him before Paris in the summer of 1590. Should he continue in the trenches, pressing more and more closely the city already reduced to great straits? Should he take the open field against the invaders and once more attempt to crush the League and its most redoubtable commander in a general engagement? Biron strenuously advised the continuance of the siege. Turenne, now, through his recent marriage with the heiress, called Duc de Bouillon, great head of the Huguenot party in France, counselled as warmly the open attack. Henry, hesitating more than was customary with him, at last decided on a middle course. The resolution did not seem a very wise one, but the king, who had been so signally out-generalled in the preceding campaign by the great Italian, was anxious to avoid his former errors, and might perhaps fall into as

[24] Bentivoglio, *ubi sup* De Thou, *ubi sup.* Dondini, iii. 474, *seqq.*

great ones by attempting two inconsistent lines of action. Leaving Biron in command of the infantry and a portion of the horse to continue the siege, he took the field himself with the greater part of the cavalry, intending to intercept and harass the enemy and to prevent his manifest purpose of throwing reinforcements and supplies into the invested city.

Proceeding to Neufchâtel and Aumale, he soon found himself in the neighbourhood of the Leaguers, and it was not long before skirmishing began. At this time, on a memorable occasion, Henry, forgetting as usual in his eagerness for the joys of the combat that he was not a young captain of cavalry with his spurs to win by dashing into every mad adventure that might present itself, but a king fighting for his crown, with the welfare of a whole people depending on his fortunes, thought proper to place himself at the head of a handful of troopers to reconnoitre in person the camp of the Leaguers. Starting with five hundred horse, and ordering Lavardin and Givry to follow with a larger body, while the Dukes of Nevers and Longueville were to move out, should it prove necessary, in force, the king rode forth as merrily as to a hunting party, drove in the scouts and pickets of the confederated armies, and, advancing still farther in his investigations, soon found himself attacked by a cavalry force of the enemy much superior to his own. A skirmish began, and it was necessary for the little troop to beat a hasty retreat, fighting as it ran. It was not long before Henry was recognised by the enemy, and the chase became all the more lively; George Basti, the famous Albanian trooper, commanding the force which pressed most closely upon the king. The news spread to the camp of the League that the Béarnese was the leader of the skirmishers. Mayenne believed it, and urged the instant advance of the flying squadron and of the whole vanguard. Farnese refused. It was impossible that the king should be there, he said, doing picket duty at the head of a company. It was a clumsy ambush to bring on a general engagement in the open field, and he was not to be drawn out of his

trenches into a trap by such a shallow device. A French captain, who by command of Henry had purposely allowed himself to be taken, informed his captors that the skirmishers were in reality supported by a heavy force of infantry. This suggestion of the ready Béarnese confirmed the doubts of Alexander. Meantime the skirmishing steeplechase went on before his eyes. The king dashing down a hill received an arquebus shot in his side, but still rode for his life. Lavardin and Givry came to the rescue, but a panic seized their followers as the rumour flew that the king was mortally wounded—was already dead—so that they hardly brought a sufficient force to beat back the Leaguers. Givry's horse was soon killed under him, and his own thigh crushed; Lavardin was himself dangerously wounded. The king was more hard pressed than ever, men were falling on every side of him, when four hundred French dragoons—as a kind of musketeers who rode on hacks to the scene of action but did their work on foot, were called at that day—now dismounted and threw themselves between Henry and his pursuers. Nearly every man of them laid down his life, but they saved the king's. Their vigorous hand to hand fighting kept off the assailants until Nevers and Longueville received the king at the gates of Aumale with a force before which the Leaguers were fain to retreat as rapidly as they had come.[25]

[25] Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* Dondini, iii. 480–494. Coloma, v. 81, *seqq.*, who gives the date of this remarkable skirmish as Feb. 16, while Umton furnishes a description of the affair in his letter of $\frac{27 \text{ Jan.}}{6 \text{ Feb.}}$. Both were present on the ground.

"The king was most unhappily shot into the lowest part of his reins, which did nothing amaze him, and he notwithstanding, with great resolution, comforted the rest, and made his retreat. . . . . The shot entered with obliquity downwards into the flesh, and not directly into the body, so that great hope is received of his short recovery, and the surgeon is of opinion that no vital part is offended." Umton (who made the whole campaign with the King) to Burghley, $\frac{27 \text{ Jan.}}{6 \text{ Feb.}}$, 1592. (S. P. Office MS.)

Sir E. Stafford, who died towards the end of 1590, was succeeded as ambassador to Henry IV. by Sir Henry Umton, or Umpton, son of Sir Edward Umpton, by Anne, relict of John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, and eldest daughter of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset. In the spring of this year he challenged the Duke of Guise for speaking of Queen Elizabeth "impudently, lightly, and overboldly, whose sacred person he represented." He proposed to meet the Duke with whatever arms he should choose, and on horseback or foot. "Nor would I have you to think," said the envoy, "any inequality of person between us,

In this remarkable skirmish of Aumale the opposite qualities of Alexander and of Henry were signally illustrated. The king, by his constitutional temerity, by his almost puerile love of confronting danger for the danger's sake, was on the verge of sacrificing himself with all the hopes of his house and of the nobler portion of his people for an absolute nothing; while the duke, out of his superabundant caution, peremptorily refused to stretch out his hand and seize the person of his great enemy when directly within his grasp. Dead or alive, the Béarnese was unquestionably on that day in the power of Farnese, and with him the whole issue of the campaign and of the war. Never were the narrow limits that separate valour on the one side and discretion on the other from unpardonable lunacy more nearly effaced than on that occasion.

When would such an opportunity occur again?

The king's wound proved not very dangerous, although for many days troublesome, and it required, on account of his general state of health, a thorough cure. Meantime the royalists fell back from Aumale and Neufchâtel, both of which places were at once occupied by the Leaguers.

In pursuance of his original plan, the Duke of Parma advanced with his customary steadiness and deliberation towards Rouen. It was his intention to assault the king's army in its entrenchments in combination with a determined sortie to be made by the besieged garrison. His preparations for the attack were ready on the 26th February, when he suddenly received a communication from De Villars, who had thus far most ably and gallantly conducted the defence of the place, informing him that it was no longer necessary to make a general attack. On the day before he had made a sally from the four gates of the city, had fallen upon the

I being issued of as great a race and noble house every way as yourself. . . . . If you consent not to meet me, I will hold you, and cause you to be generally held, for the errantest coward, and most slanderous slave that lives in all France." Nothing came of the challenge. Umpton died four years afterwards in the French King's camp at La Fere, 8 July, 1596. Vide Fuller's Worthies, vol. i. pp. 91, 92 (ed. 1811).

besiegers in great force, had wounded Biron and killed six hundred of his soldiers, had spiked several pieces of artillery and captured others which he had successfully brought into the town, and had in short so damaged the enemy's works and disconcerted him in all his plans, that he was confident of holding the place longer than the king could afford to stay in front of him.[26] All he wished was a moderate reinforcement of men and munitions. Farnese by no means sympathized with the confident tone of Villars nor approved of his proposition. He had come to relieve Rouen and to raise the siege, and he preferred to do his work thoroughly. Mayenne was however most heartily in favour of taking the advice of Villars. He urged that it was difficult for the Béarnese to keep an army long in the field, still more so in the trenches. Let them provide for the immediate wants of the city; then the usual process of decomposition would soon be witnessed in the ill-paid, ill-fed, desultory forces of the heretic pretender.

Alexander deferred to the wishes of Mayenne, although against his better judgment. Eight hundred infantry were successfully sent into Rouen. The army of the League then countermarched into Picardy near the confines of Artois.[27]

They were closely followed by Henry at the head of his cavalry, and lively skirmishes were of frequent occurrence. In a military point of view none of these affairs were of consequence, but there was one which partook at once of the comic and the pathetic. For it chanced that in a cavalry action of more than common vivacity the Count Chaligny found himself engaged in a hand to hand conflict with a very dashing swordsman, who, after dealing and receiving many severe blows, at last succeeded in disarming the count and taking him prisoner. It was the fortune of war, and, but a few days before, might have been the fate of the great Henry himself. But Chaligny's mortification at his captivity became

[26] Parma to Philip, 11 March, 1592. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) Compare Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* De Thou, xi. 470, *seqq.*

[27] Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* Dondini, iii. 497–630. Coloma, v. 85–95. Meteren, xvi. 302, 303. Bor. III. xxviii. 616–620.

intense when he discovered that the knight to whom he had surrendered was no other than the king's jester.[28] That he, a chieftain of the Holy League, the long-descended scion of the illustrious house of Lorraine, brother of the great Duke of Mercœur, should become the captive of a Huguenot buffoon seemed the most stinging jest yet perpetrated since fools had come in fashion. The famous Chicot—who was as fond of a battle as of a gibe, and who was almost as reckless a rider as his master—proved on this occasion that the cap and bells could cover as much magnanimity as did the most chivalrous crest. Although desperately wounded in the struggle which had resulted in his triumph, he generously granted to the Count his freedom without ransom. The proud Lorrainer returned to his Leaguers and the poor fool died afterwards of his wounds.[29]

The army of the allies moved through Picardy towards the confines of Artois, and sat down leisurely to beleaguer Rue, a low-lying place on the banks and near the mouth of the Somme, the only town in the province which still held for the king. It was sufficiently fortified to withstand a good deal of battering, and it certainly seemed mere trifling for the great Duke of Parma to leave the Netherlands in such confusion, with young Maurice of Nassau carrying everything before him, and to come all the way into Normandy in order, with the united armies of Spain and the League, to besiege the insignificant town of Rue.

And this was the opinion of Farnese, but he had chosen throughout the campaign to show great deference to the judgment of Mayenne. Meantime the month of March wore away, and what had been predicted came to pass. Henry's forces dwindled away as usual. His cavaliers rode off to forage for themselves, when their battles were denied them, and the king was now at the head of not more than sixteen thousand foot and five thousand horse. On the other hand the Leaguers' army had been melting quite as rapidly. With

[28] De Thou, *ubi sup.* 468. Umton to Burghley, 8 Feb. 1592. (S. P. Office MS.)

[29] De Thou, *loc. cit.*

the death of Pope Sfondrato, his nephew Montemarciano had disappeared with his two thousand Swiss ; while the French cavalry and infantry, ill-fed and uncomfortable, were diminishing daily. Especially the Walloons, Flemings, and other Netherlanders of Parma's army, took advantage of their proximity to the borders and escaped in large numbers to their own homes. It was but meagre and profitless campaigning on both sides during those wretched months of winter and early spring, although there was again an opportunity for Sir Roger Williams, at the head of two hundred musketeers and one hundred and fifty pikemen, to make one of his brilliant skirmishes under the eye of the Béarnese. Surprised and without armour, he jumped, in doublet and hose, on horseback, and led his men merrily against five squadrons of Spanish and Italian horse, and six companies of Spanish infantry ; singled out and unhorsed the leader of the Spanish troopers, and nearly cut off the head of the famous Albanian chief George Basti with one swinging blow of his sword. Then, being reinforced by some other English companies, he succeeded in driving the whole body of Italians and Spaniards, with great loss, quite into their entrenchments. "The king doth commend him very highly," said Umton, "and doth more than wonder at the valour of our nation. I never heard him give more honour to any service nor to any man than he doth to Sir Roger Williams and the rest, whom he held as lost men, and for which he has caused public thanks to be given to God." [30]

At last Villars, who had so peremptorily rejected assistance at the end of February, sent to say that if he were not relieved by the middle of April he should be obliged to surrender the city. If the siege were not raised by the twentieth of the month he informed Parma, to his profound astonishment, that Rouen would be in Henry's hands.[31]

In effecting this result the strict blockade maintained by the Dutch squadron at the mouth of the river, and the reso-

[30] Umton to Burghley, 21 April, 1592. (S. P. Office MS.)
[31] Bentivoglio, Dondini, Coloma, Meteren, Bor, *ubi sup.*

lute manner in which those cruisers dashed at every vessel attempting to bring relief to Rouen, were mainly instrumental. As usual with the stern Hollanders and Zeelanders when engaged at sea with the Spaniards, it was war to the knife. Early in April twelve large vessels, well armed and manned, attempted to break the blockade. A combat ensued, at the end of which eight of the Spanish ships were captured, two were sunk, and two were set on fire in token of victory, every man on board of all being killed and thrown into the sea. Queen Elizabeth herself gave the first news of this achievement to the Dutch envoy in London. "And in truth," said he, "her Majesty expressed herself, in communicating these tidings, with such affection and extravagant joy to the glory and honour of our nation and men-of-war's-men, that it wonderfully delighted me, and did me good into my very heart to hear it from her." [32]

Instantly Farnese set himself to the work which, had he followed his own judgment, would already have been accomplished. Henry with his cavalry had established himself at Dieppe and Arques, within a distance of five or six leagues from the infantry engaged in the siege of Rouen. Alexander saw the profit to be derived from the separation between the different portions of the enemy's forces, and marched straight upon the enemy's entrenchments. He knew the disadvantage of assailing a strongly fortified camp, but believed that by a well-concerted, simultaneous assault by Villars from within and the Leaguers from without, the king's forces would be compelled to raise the siege or be cut up in their trenches.

But Henry did not wait for the attack. He had changed his plan, and, for once in his life, substituted extreme caution for his constitutional temerity. Neither awaiting the assault upon his entrenchments nor seeking his enemy in the open field, he ordered the whole camp to be broken up, and on the 20th of April raised the siege.[33]

[32] Noel de Caron to the States-General, 22 April, 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

[33] Ibid. Parma to Philip, 25 April, 1592. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Same to same, 2 June, 1592. Ibid.

Farnese marched into Rouen, where the Leaguers were received with tumultuous joy, and this city, most important for the purposes of the League and for Philip's ulterior designs, was thus wrested from the grasp just closing upon it. Henry's main army now concentrated itself in the neighbourhood of Dieppe, but the cavalry under his immediate superintendence continued to harass the Leaguers. It was now determined to lay siege to Caudebec, on the right bank of the Seine, three leagues below Rouen; the possession of this place by the enemy being a constant danger and difficulty to Rouen, whose supplies by the Seine were thus cut off.

Alexander, as usual, superintended the planting of the batteries against the place. He had been suffering during the whole campaign with those dropsical ailments which were making life a torture to him; yet his indomitable spirit rose superior to his physical disorders, and he wrought all day long on foot or on horseback, when he seemed only fit to be placed on his bed as a rapid passage to his grave. On this occasion, in company with the Italian engineer Properzio, he had been for some time examining with critical nicety the preliminaries for the siege, when it was suddenly observed by those around him that he was growing pale. It then appeared that he had received a musket-ball between the wrist and the elbow, and had been bleeding profusely; but had not indicated by a word or the movement of a muscle that he had been wounded, so intent was he upon carrying out the immediate task to which he had set himself. It was indispensable, however, that he should now take to his couch. The wound was not trifling, and to one in his damaged and dropsical condition it was dangerous. Fever set in, with symptoms of gangrene, and it became necessary to entrust the command of the League to Mayenne.[34] But it was hardly concealed from Parma that the duke was playing a double game. Prince Ranuccio, according to his father's express wish, was placed provisionally at the head of the Flemish forces. This

[34] Bentivoglio, Dondini, Coloma, De Thou, Meteren, Bor, *ubi sup.* (Letter of Parma last cited.)

was conceded, however, with much heart-burning, and with consequences easily to be imagined.

Meantime Caudebec fell at once. Henry did nothing to relieve it, and the place could offer but slight resistance to the force arrayed against it. The bulk of the king's army was in the neighbourhood of Dieppe, where they had been recently strengthened by twenty companies of Netherlanders and Scotchmen brought by Count Philip Nassau.[35] The League's headquarters were in the village of Yvetot, capital of the realm of the whimsical little potentate so long renowned under that name.[36]

The king, in pursuance of the plan he had marked out for himself, restrained his skirmishing more than was his wont. Nevertheless he lay close to Yvetot. His cavalry, swelling and falling as usual like an Alpine torrent, had now filled up its old channels again, for once more the mountain chivalry had poured themselves around their king. With ten thousand horsemen he was now pressing the Leaguers, from time to time, very hard, and on one occasion the skirmishing became so close and so lively that a general engagement seemed imminent. Young Ranuccio had a horse shot under him, and his father—suffering as he was—had himself dragged out of bed and brought on a litter into the field, where he was set on horseback, trampling on wounds and disease, and, as it were, on death itself, that he might by his own unsurpassed keenness of eye and quickness of resource protect the army which had been entrusted to his care. The action continued all day; young Bentivoglio, nephew of the famous cardinal, historian and diplomatist, receiving a bad wound in the leg, as he fought gallantly at the side of Ranuccio. Carlo Coloma also distinguished himself in the engagement. Night separated the combatants before either side had gained a manifest advantage, and on the morrow it seemed for the interest of neither to resume the struggle.[37]

3 May, 1592.

The field where this campaign was to be fought was a

[35] Bor, III. xxviii. 604. [36] De Thou, xi. 481, *seqq.*
[37] Bentivoglio, Dondini, Coloma, Meteren, Bor, De Thou, *ubi sup.*

narrow peninsula enclosed between the sea and the rivers Seine and Dieppe.[38] In this peninsula, called the Land of Caux, it was Henry's intention to shut up his enemy. Farnese had finished the work that he had been sent to do, and was anxious, as Henry was aware, to return to the Netherlands. Rouen was relieved, Caudebec had fallen. There was not food or forage enough in the little peninsula to feed both the city and the whole army of the League. Shut up in this narrow area, Alexander must starve or surrender. His only egress was into Picardy and so home to Artois, through the base of the isosceles triangle between the two rivers and on the borders of Picardy. On this base Henry had posted his whole army. Should Farnese assail him, thus provided with a strong position and superiority of force, defeat was certain. Should he remain where he was, he must inevitably starve. He had no communications with the outside. The Hollanders lay with their ships below Caudebec, blockading the river's mouth and the coast. His only chance of extrication lay across the Seine. But Alexander was neither a bird nor a fish, and it was necessary, so Henry thought, to be either the one or the other to cross that broad, deep, and rapid river, where there were no bridges, and where the constant ebb and flow of the tide made transportation almost impossible in face of a powerful army in rear and flank. Farnese's situation seemed desperate, while the shrewd Béarnese sat smiling serenely, carefully watching at the mouth of the trap into which he had at last inveigled his mighty adversary. Secure of his triumph, he seemed to have changed his nature, and to have become as sedate and wary as, by habit, he was impetuous and hot.

And in truth Farnese found himself in very narrow quarters. There was no hay for his horses, no bread for his men. A penny loaf was sold for two shillings. A jug of water was worth a crown. As for meat or wine, they were hardly to be dreamed of.[39] His men were becoming furious at their position. They

[38] The stream, the mouth of which is at Dieppe, was then called by the same name as the town.

[39] Bor, III. xxviii. 619.

had enlisted to fight, not to starve, and they murmured that it was better for an army to fall with weapons in its hands than to drop to pieces hourly with the enemy looking on and enjoying their agony.

It was obvious to Farnese that there were but two ways out of his dilemma. He might throw himself upon Henry—strongly entrenched as he was, and with much superior forces to his own, upon ground deliberately chosen for himself—defeat him utterly, and march over him back to the Netherlands. This would be an agreeable result; but the undertaking seemed difficult, to say the least. Or he might throw his army across the Seine and make his escape through the isle of France and Southern Picardy back to the so-called obedient provinces. But it seemed hopeless without bridges or pontoons to attempt the passage of the Seine.

There was, however, no time left for hesitation. Secretly he took his resolution and communicated it in strict confidence to Mayenne, to Ranuccio, and to one or two other chiefs. He came to Caudebec, and there, close to the margin of the river, he threw up a redoubt. On the opposite bank, he constructed another. On both he planted artillery, placing a force of eight hundred Netherlanders under Count Bossu in the one, and an equal number of the same nation, Walloons chiefly, under Barlotte in the other. He collected all the vessels, flatboats, wherries, and rafts that could be found or put together at Rouen, and then under cover of his forts he transported all the Flemish infantry, and the Spanish, French, and Italian cavalry, during the night of 22nd May to the opposite bank of the Seine. Next morning he sent up all the artillery together with the Flemish cavalry to Rouen, where, making what use he could by temporary contrivances of the broken arches of the broken bridge, in order to shorten the distance from shore to shore, he managed to convey his whole army with all its trains across the river.[40]

22 May, 1592.

[40] Bentivoglio. Dondini, Coloma, De Thou, Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Letter of Parma last cited.

A force was left behind, up to the last moment, to engage in the customary skirmishes, and to display themselves as largely as possible for the purpose of imposing upon the enemy. The young Prince of Parma had command of this rearguard. The device was perfectly successful. The news of the movement was not brought to the ears of Henry until after it had been accomplished. When the king reached the shore of the Seine, he saw to his infinite chagrin and indignation that the last stragglers of the army, including the garrison of the fort on the right bank, were just ferrying themselves across under command of Ranuccio.[41]

Furious with disappointment, he brought some pieces of artillery to bear upon the triumphant fugitives. Not a shot told, and the Leaguers had the satisfaction of making a bonfire in the king's face of the boats which had brought them over. Then, taking up their line of march rapidly inland, they placed themselves completely out of the reach of the Huguenot guns.

Henry had a bridge at Pont de l'Arche, and his first impulse was to pursue with his cavalry, but it was obvious that his infantry could never march by so circuitous a route fast enough to come up with the enemy, who had already so prodigious a stride in advance.[42]

There was no need to disguise it to himself. Henry saw himself for the second time out-generalled by the consummate Farnese. The trap was broken, the game had given him the slip. The manner in which the duke had thus extricated himself from a profound dilemma, in which his fortunes seemed hopelessly sunk, has usually been considered one of the most extraordinary exploits of his life.[43]

Precisely at this time, too, ill news reached Henry from Brittany and the neighbouring country. The Princes Conti and Dombes had been obliged, on the 13th May, 1592, to raise the siege of Craon, in consequence of the advance of the Duke of Mercœur, with a force of seven thousand men.[44]

[41] Bentivoglio, Dondini, Coloma, De Thou, Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.* [42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid. [44] Umton to Burghley, 24 May, 1592, O. S. (S. P. Office MS.)

They numbered, including lanzknechts and the English contingent, about half as many, and before they could effect their retreat, were attacked by Mercœur, and utterly routed. The English, who alone stood to their colours, were nearly all cut to pieces. The rest made a disorderly retreat,[45] but were ultimately, with few exceptions, captured or slain. The duke, following up his victory, seized Château Gontier and La Val, important crossing places on the river Mayenne, and laid siege to Mayenne, capital city of that region. The panic, spreading through Brittany and Maine, threatened the king's cause there with complete overthrow, hampered his operations in Normandy, and vastly encouraged the Leaguers. It became necessary for Henry to renounce his designs upon Rouen, and the pursuit of Parma, and to retire to Vernon, there to occupy himself with plans for the relief of Brittany. In vain had the Earl of Essex, whose brother had already been killed in the campaign, manifested such headlong gallantry in that country as to call forth the sharpest rebukes from the admiring but anxious Elizabeth. The handful of brave Englishmen who had been withdrawn from the Netherlands, much to the dissatisfaction of the States-General, in order to defend the coasts of Brittany, would have been better employed under Maurice of Nassau. So soon as the heavy news reached the king, the faithful Umton was sent for. "He imparted the same unto me," said the envoy, "with extraordinary passion and discontent. He discoursed at large of his miserable estate, of the factions of his servants, and of their ill-dispositions, and then required my opinion touching his course for Brittany, as also what further aid he might expect from her Majesty; alleging that unless he were presently strengthened by England it was impossible for him longer to resist the greatness of the King of Spain, who assailed his country by Brittany, Languedoc, the Low Countries by the Duke of Saxony and the Duke of Lorraine, and so ended his speech passionately."[46] Thus adjured, Sir Henry spoke to the king firmly but courteously, reminding him how, contrary to

[45] Umton to Burghley, 24 May, 1592, O. S. (S. P. Office MS.) [46] Ibid.

English advice, he had followed other counsellors to the neglect of Brittany, and had broken his promises to the queen. He concluded by urging him to advance into that country in person, but did not pledge himself on behalf of her Majesty to any further assistance. "To this," said Umton, "the king gave a willing ear, and replied, with many thanks, and without disallowing of anything that I alleged, yielding many excuses of his want of means, not of disposition, to provide a remedy, not forgetting to acknowledge her Majesty's care of him and his country, and especially of Brittany, excusing much the bad disposition of his counsellors, and inclining much to my motion to go in person thither, especially because he might thereby give her Majesty better satisfaction; . . . . and protesting that he would either immediately himself make war there in those parts or send an army thither. I do not doubt," added the ambassador, "but with good handling her Majesty may now obtain any reasonable matter for the conservation of Brittany, as also for a place of retreat for the English, and I urge continually the yielding of Brest into her Majesty's hands, whereunto I find the king well inclined, if he might bring it to pass."[47]

Alexander passed a few days in Paris, where he was welcomed with much cordiality, recruiting his army for a brief period in the land of Brie, and then—broken in health but entirely successful—he dragged himself once more to Spa to drink the waters. He left an auxiliary force with Mayenne, and promised—infinitely against his own wishes—to obey his master's commands and return again before the winter to do the League's work.[48]

And thus Alexander had again solved a difficult problem. He had saved for his master and for the League the second city of France and the whole coast of Normandy. Rouen had been relieved in masterly manner even as Paris had been succoured the year before. He had done this, although opposed by the sleepless energy and the exuberant valour of the quick-witted Navarre, and although

[47] Umton to Burghley, 24 May, 1592, O. S. (S. P. Office MS.) [48] Ibid.

encumbered by the assistance of the ponderous Duke of Mayenne. His military reputation, through these two famous reliefs and retreats, grew greater than ever.

No commander of the age was thought capable of doing what he had thus done. Yet, after all, what had he accomplished? Did he not feel in his heart of hearts that he was but a strong and most skilful swimmer struggling for a little while against an ocean-tide which was steadily sweeping him and his master and all their fortunes far out into the infinite depths?

Something of this breathed ever in his most secret utterances. But, so long as life was in him, his sword and his genius were at the disposal of his sovereign, to carry out a series of schemes as futile as they were nefarious.

For us, looking back upon the Past, which was then the Future, it is easy to see how remorselessly the great current of events was washing away the system and the personages seeking to resist its power and to oppose the great moral principles by which human affairs in the long run are invariably governed. Spain and Rome were endeavouring to obliterate the landmarks of race, nationality, historical institutions, and the tendencies of awakened popular conscience, throughout Christendom, and to substitute for them a dead level of conformity to one regal and sacerdotal despotism.

England, Holland, the Navarre party in France, and a considerable part of Germany were contending for national unity and independence, for vested and recorded rights. Much farther than they themselves or their chieftains dreamed those millions of men were fighting for a system of temperate human freedom; for that emancipation under just laws from arbitrary human control, which is the right—however frequently trampled upon—of all classes, conditions, and races of men; and for which it is the instinct of the human race to continue to struggle under every disadvantage, and often against all hope, throughout the ages, so long as the very principle of humanity shall not be extinguished in those who have been created after their Maker's image.

It may safely be doubted whether the great Queen, the Béarnese, Alexander Farnese, or his master, with many of their respective adherents, differed very essentially from each other in their notions of the right divine and the right of the people. But history has shown us which of them best understood the spirit of the age, and had the keenest instinct to keep themselves in the advance by moving fastest in the direction whither it was marshalling all men. There were many earnest, hard-toiling men in those days, men who believed in the work to which they devoted their lives. Perhaps, too, the devil-worshippers did their master's work as strenuously and heartily as any, and got fame and pelf for their pains. Fortunately, a good portion of what they so laboriously wrought for has vanished into air; while humanity has at least gained something from those who deliberately or instinctively conformed themselves to her eternal laws.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Return of Prince Maurice to the siege of Steenwyck — Capitulation of the besieged — Effects of the introduction of mining operations — Maurice besieges Coeworden — Verdugo attempts to relieve the city, but fails — The city capitulates, and Prince Maurice retreats into winter quarters.

WHILE Farnese had thus been strengthening the bulwarks of Philip's universal monarchy in that portion of his proposed French dominions which looked towards England, there had been opportunity for Prince Maurice to make an assault upon the Frisian defences of this vast realm. It was difficult to make half Europe into one great Spanish fortification, guarding its every bastion and every point of the curtain, without far more extensive armaments than the "Great King," as the Leaguers proposed that Philip should entitle himself, had ever had at his disposal. It might be a colossal scheme to stretch the rod of empire over so large a portion of the earth, but the dwarfish attempts to carry the design into execution hardly reveal the hand of genius. It is astonishing to contemplate the meagre numbers and the slender funds with which this world-empire was to be asserted and maintained. The armies arrayed at any important point hardly exceeded a modern division or two; while the resources furnished for a year would hardly pay in later days for a few weeks' campaign.

When Alexander, the first commander of his time, moved out of Flanders into France with less than twenty thousand men, he left most vital portions of his master's hereditary dominions so utterly unprotected that it was possible to attack them with a handful of troops. The young disciple of Simon Stevinus now resumed that practical demonstration of his principles which had been in the previous year so well begun.

On the 28th May, 1592, Maurice, taking the field with six thousand foot and two thousand horse, came once more before Steenwyck. It will be remembered that he had been obliged to relinquish the siege of this place in order to confront the Duke of Parma in July, 1591, at Nymegen. 28 May, 1592.

The city—very important from its position, being the key to the province of Drenthe as well as one of the safeguards of Friesland—had been besieged in vain by Count Renneberg after his treasonable surrender of Groningen, of which he was governor, to the Spaniards, but had been subsequently surprised by Tassis. Since that time it had held for the king. Its fortifications were strong, and of the best description known at that day. Its regular garrison was sixteen companies of foot and some cavalry under Antoine de Quocqueville, military governor. Besides these troops were twelve hundred Walloon infantry, commanded by Lewis, youngest Count van den Berg, a brave lad of eighteen years, with whom were the lord of Waterdyck and other Netherland nobles.[1]

To the military student the siege may possess importance as marking a transitional epoch in the history of the beleaguering science. To the general reader, as in most of the exploits of the young Poliorcetes, its details have but slender interest. Perhaps it was here that the spade first vindicated its dignity, and entitled itself to be classed as a military weapon of value along with pike and arquebus. It was here that the soldiers of Maurice, burrowing in the ground at ten stuyvers a day, were jeered at by the enemy from the battlements as boors and ditchers, who had forfeited their right to be considered soldiers—but jeered at for the last time. 30 May, 9 June.

From 30th May to 9th June the prince was occupied in throwing up earthworks on the low grounds in order to bring his guns into position. On the 13th June he began to batter with forty-five pieces, but effected little 13 June.

[1] Bor, III. xxviii. 628–633. Meteren, xvi. 304, 305. Reyd, ix. 177–180. Coloma, v. 99, 100.

more than to demolish some of the breast-works. He threw hot shot into the town very diligently, too, but did small damage. The cannonading went on for nearly a week, but the practice was so very indifferent—notwithstanding the protection of the blessed Barbara and the tuition of the bus-masters—that the besieged began to amuse themselves with these empty and monotonous salvos of the honourable Artillery Guild. When all this blazing and thundering had led to no better result than to convert a hundred thousand good Flemish florins into noise and smoke, the thrifty Netherlanders on both sides of the walls began to disparage the young general's reputation. After all, they said, the Spaniards were right when they called artillery mere *espanta-vellacos* or scare-cowards. This burrowing and bellowing must at last give place to the old-fashioned push of pike, and then it would be seen who the soldiers were. Observations like these were freely made under a flag of truce ; for on the 19th June—notwithstanding their contempt for the *espanta-vellacos*—the besieged had sent out a deputation to treat for an honourable surrender. Maurice entertained the negotiators hospitably in his own tent, but the terms suggested to him were inadmissible. Nothing came of the conference therefore but mutual criticisms, friendly enough, although sufficiently caustic.

19 June.

Maurice now ceased cannonading, and burrowed again for ten days without interruption. Four mines, leading to different points of the defences, were patiently constructed, and two large chambers at the terminations, neatly finished off and filled respectively with five thousand and twenty-five hundred pounds of powder, were at last established under two of the principal bastions.[3]

During all this digging there had been a couple of sorties in which the besieged had inflicted great damage on their enemy, and got back into the town with a few prisoners, having lost but six of their own men.[4] Sir Francis Vere had

[2] Reyd, *ubi sup.*

[3] Bor, Meteren, Reyd, Coloma, *ubi sup.*

[4] Ibid. Coloma says that three hundred of the besiegers were killed in this sally.

been severely wounded in the leg, so that he was obliged to keep his bed during the rest of the siege. Verdugo, too, had made a feeble attempt to reinforce the place with three hundred men, sixty or seventy of whom had entered, while the rest had been killed or captured.[5] On such a small scale was Philip's world-empire contended for by his stadholder in Friesland; yet it was certainly not the fault of the stout old Portuguese. Verdugo would rather have sent thirty thousand men to save the front door of his great province than three hundred. But every available man—and few enough of them they were—had been sent out of the Netherlands, to defend the world-empire in its outposts of Normandy and Brittany.

This was Philip the Prudent's system for conquering the world, and men looked upon him as the consummation of kingcraft.

On the 3rd July Maurice ordered his whole force to be in readiness for the assault. The mines were then sprung. The bastion of the east gate was blown to ruins. The mine under the Gast-Huys bulwark, burst outwardly, and buried alive many Hollanders standing ready for the assault.[6] At this untoward accident Maurice hesitated to give the signal for storming the breach, but the panic within the town was so evident that Lewis William lost no time in seizing the overthrown eastern bulwark, from the ruins of which he looked over the whole city.[7] The other broken bastion was likewise easily mastered, and the besieged, seeing the storm about to burst upon them with irresistible fury, sent a trumpet. Meantime Maurice, inspecting the effects of the explosion and preparing for the assault, had been shot through the left cheek. The wound was not dangerous, and the prince extracted the bullet with his own hand,[8] but the change of half an inch would have made it fatal. He was not incapacitated—after his wound had been dressed, amidst the remonstrances

3 July.

[5] Bor, Meteren, Reyd, Coloma, *ubi sup.*
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid. Letter of John the Younger to his father, in Groen v. Prinsterer (Archives II. s. i. 198.)

of his friends for his temerity—from listening to the propositions of the city. They were refused, for the prince was sure of having his town on his own terms.

Next day he permitted the garrison to depart; the officers and soldiers promising not to serve the King of Spain on the Netherland side of the Rhine for six months. They were to take their baggage, but to leave arms, flags, munitions, and provisions. Both Maurice and Lewis William were for insisting on sterner conditions, but the States' deputies and members of the council who were present, as usual, in camp urged the building of the golden bridge. After all, a fortified city, the second in importance after Groningen of all those regions, was the real prize contended for. The garrison was meagre and much reduced during the siege. The fortifications, of masonry and earthwork combined, were nearly as strong as ever. Saint Barbara had done them but little damage, but the town itself was in a sorry plight. Churches and houses were nearly all shot to pieces, and the inhabitants had long been dwelling in the cellars. Two hundred of the garrison remained, severely wounded, in the town; three hundred and fifty had been killed, among others the young cousin of the Nassaus, Count Lewis van den Berg. The remainder of the royalists marched out, and were treated with courtesy by Maurice, who gave them an escort, permitting the soldiers to retain their side-arms, and furnishing horses to the governor.

4 July.

In the besieging army five or six hundred had been killed and many wounded, but not in numbers bearing the same proportion to the slain as in modern battles.[9]

The siege had lasted forty-four days. When it was over, and men came out from the town to examine at leisure the

[9] At least this is the testimony of all the Dutch historians, but—as has been the case in all sieges and battles since men began to besiege and to fight battles—the evidence given by the two sides is in almost direct conflict.

According to Coloma, thirteen hundred of the besiegers had been killed outright during the assaults, and there were so many wounded that not 5000 were left unhurt in their camp, out of 10,000 with which the siege began. On the other hand, according to the same authority, the besieged had lost but 150 killed, and a few more than that number wounded: f. 99vo. But we have seen that the whole of the besieging army amounted only to 8000.

prince's camp and his field of operations, they were astounded at the amount of labor performed in so short a time. The oldest campaigners confessed that they never before had understood what a siege really was, and they began to conceive a higher respect for the art of the engineer than they had ever done before. "Even those who were wont to rail at science and labour," said one who was present in the camp of Maurice, "declared that the siege would have been a far more arduous undertaking had it not been for those two engineers, Joost Matthes of Alost, and Jacob Kemp of Gorcum. It is high time to take from soldiers the false notion that it is shameful to work with the spade; an error which was long prevalent among the Netherlanders, and still prevails among the French, to the great detriment of the king's affairs, as may be seen in his sieges." [10]

Certainly the result of Henry's recent campaign before Rouen had proved sufficiently how much better it would have been for him had there been some Dutch Joosts and Jacobs with their picks and shovels in his army at that critical period. They might perhaps have baffled Parma as they had done Verdugo.

Without letting the grass grow under his feet, Maurice now led his army from Steenwyck to Zwol and arrived on the 26th July before Coeworden. 26 July, 1592.

This place, very strong by art and still stronger by nature, was the other key to all north Netherland—Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe. Should it fall into the hands of the republic it would be impossible for the Spaniards to retain much longer the rich and important capital of all that country, the city of Groningen. Coeworden lay between two vast morasses, one of which—the Bourtange swamp—extended some thirty miles to the bay of the Dollart; while the other spread nearly as far in a westerly direction to the Zuyder Zee. Thus these two great marshes were a frame—an almost impassable barrier—by which the northern third of the whole territory of the republic was encircled and de-

[10] Reyd, *ubi sup.*

fended. Throughout this great morass there was not a hand-breadth of solid ground—not a resting-place for a human foot, save the road which led through Coeworden. This passage lay upon a natural deposit of hard, dry sand, interposed as if by a caprice of nature between the two swamps, and was about half a mile in width.[11]

The town itself was well fortified, and Verdugo had been recently strengthening the position with additional earthworks.[12] A thousand veterans formed the garrison under command of another Van den Berg, the Count Frederic.[13] It was the fate of these sister's-children of the great founder of the republic to serve the cause of foreign despotism with remarkable tenacity against their own countrymen, and against their nearest blood relations. On many conspicuous occasions they were almost as useful to Spain and the Inquisition as the son and nearly all the other kinsmen of William the Silent had rendered themselves to the cause of Holland and of freedom.

Having thoroughly entrenched his camp before Coeworden and begun the regular approaches, Maurice left his cousin Lewis William to superintend the siege operations for the moment, and advanced towards Ootmarsum, a frontier town which might give him trouble if in the hands of a relieving force. The place fell at once, with the loss of but one life to the States army, but that a very valuable one; General de Famars, one of the original signers of the famous Compromise, and a most distinguished soldier of the republic, having been killed before the gates.

On the 31st July, Maurice returned to his entrenchments. July 31, 1592. The enemy professed unbounded confidence; Van den Berg not doubting that he should be relieved by Verdugo, and Verdugo being sure that Van den Berg would need no relief. The Portuguese veteran indeed was inclined to wonder at Maurice's presumption in attacking so impregnable a fortress. "If Coeworden does not

[11] Guicciardini *in voce*. Reyd, ix. 186, *seqq*. [12] Ibid.
[13] Reyd, *ubi sup*. Meteren, xvi. 306. Bor, III. xxviii. 639, *seqq*.

hold," said he, "there is no place in the world that can hold."[14]

Count Peter Ernest was still acting as governor-general; for Alexander Farnese, on returning from his second French campaign, had again betaken himself, shattered and melancholy, to the waters of Spa, leaving the responsibility for Netherland affairs upon the German octogenarian.[15] To him, and to the nonagenarian Mondragon at Antwerp, the veteran Verdugo now called loudly for aid against the youthful pedant, whom all men had been laughing at a twelvemonth or so before. The Macedonian phalanx, Simon Stevinus and delving Dutch boors—unworthy of the name of soldiers—seemed to be steadily digging the ground from under Philip's feet in his hereditary domains.

What would become of the world-empire, where was the great king—not of Spain alone, nor of France alone—but the great monarch of all Christendom, to plant his throne securely, if his Frisian strongholds, his most important northern outposts, were to fall before an almost beardless youth at the head of a handful of republican militia?

Verdugo did his best, but the best was little. The Spanish and Italian legions had been sent out of the Netherlands into France. Many had died there, many were in hospital after their return, nearly all the rest were mutinous for want of pay.

On the 16th August, Maurice formally summoned Coeworden to surrender. After the trumpeter had blown thrice, Count Van den Berg, forbidding all others, came alone upon the walls and demanded his message. "To claim this city in the name of Prince Maurice of Nassau and of the States-General," was the reply. 16 Aug. 1592.

"Tell him first to beat down my walls as flat as the ditch," said Van den Berg, "and then to bring five or six storms. Six months after that I will think whether I will send a trumpet."[16]

[14] Reyd, *ubi sup.*

[15] Parma to P. E. Mansfeld, 16 Aug. 1592. Same to Philip, 24 Aug. 1592. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[16] Bor, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

The prince proceeded steadily with his approaches, but he was infinitely chagrined by the departure out of his camp of Sir Francis Vere with his English contingent of three regiments, whom Queen Elizabeth had peremptorily ordered to the relief of King Henry in Brittany.

Nothing amazes the modern mind so much as the exquisite paucity of forces and of funds by which the world-empire was fought for and resisted in France, Holland, Spain, and England. The scenes of war were rapidly shifted—almost like the slides of a magic-lantern—from one country to another; the same conspicuous personages, almost the same individual armies, perpetually re-appearing in different places, as if a wild phantasmagoria were capriciously repeating itself to bewilder the imagination. Essex, and Vere, and Roger Williams, and Black Norris—Van der Does, and Admiral Nassau, the Meetkerks and Count Philip—Farnese and Mansfeld, George Basti, Arenberg, Berlaymont, La Noue and Teligny, Aquila and Coloma—were seen alternately fighting, retreating, triumphant, beleaguering, campaigning all along the great territory which extends from the Bay of Biscay to the crags of Brittany, and across the narrow seas to the bogs of Ireland, and thence through the plains of Picardy and Flanders to the swamps of Groningen and the frontiers of the Rhine.

This was the arena in which the great struggle was ever going on, but the champions were so few in number that their individual shapes become familiar to us like the figures of an oft-repeated pageant. And now the withdrawal of certain companies of infantry and squadrons of cavalry from the Spanish armies into France, had left obedient Netherland too weak to resist rebellious Netherland, while, on the other hand, the withdrawal of some twenty or thirty companies of English auxiliaries—most hard-fighting veterans it is true, but very few in number—was likely to imperil the enterprise of Maurice in Friesland.

The removal of these companies from the Low Countries to strengthen the Béarnese in the north of France, formed

the subject of much bitter diplomatic conference between the States and England; the order having been communicated by the great queen herself in many a vehement epistle and caustic speech, enforced by big, manly oaths.[17]

[17] The cautionary towns required to be held at this season with a firm hand. The days were gone when the States looked up to the representative of the Queen as a "Messiah," and felt that she alone sustained them from sinking into ruin. A series of victories over the Spaniards, and the amazing fatuity of the Spanish policy, had given them vast confidence in themselves, and a growing contempt for their great enemy. They did not feel themselves entirely dependent on England, but considered the services rendered by each country to the other as fairly equal, and they therefore the more keenly resented the withdrawal of troops to which they believed themselves thoroughly entitled by their contract. It was an infraction of the treaty, in their opinion, to hold their cities, yet to send the English auxiliaries into France. There were rising commotions in Flushing and Ostend, while at the same time it was felt that the foreign enemy at any moment was capable of making a sudden assault on those most vital places. "It is advertised me out of England," said Sir Robert Sidney, Governor of Flushing, "that there be some men of war that say that Flushing may be kept with a white rod. I know not whether they have the Caduceus which the poets write that Mercury had, which was of force to bring sleep upon all men. If they have not, truly they little know this town, or perhaps will not say what indeed they think, being not in their own particular interested in the good or ill of it. . . . . The burghers, I confess, carry themselves very honestly and I persuade myself that the queen hath many true servants among them, notwithstanding the chief way to keep them still honest is to have such a garrison as may pay them at any time the price of doing ill." The governor protested that twenty-two companies of 135 men each was not a stronger garrison for his town than five companies had been a few years before. The republican sentiment had so much displaced the feeling of dependence on a foreign sovereign that the protectors were grown to appear almost like enemies. Formerly matters were very different. "*Then* was the name of the queen reverenced in all these countries," he said, "as of another saviour; and there was love unto her, and unto her subjects, such as if they had been all of one nation. The Earl of Leicester, in name and effect, was Governour-General of the whole country. My brother (Sir Philip Sidney) had, joined to the government which now I have, the regiment of Zeeland, which are the troops from which this garrison has to fear most any sudden harm. The provinces then were poor, and ill order among them, and the States generally hated of the people. Every day a town lost, the King of Spain's army mighty, himself entangled with no other wars, and to all these harms there was no show of hope but from the queen, all other princes directly shunning their alliance. The people saw that the queen's taking the cause in hand, and the succour she sent, had been the only pillar which, after the loss of Antwerp, had held up their State from utter ruin, which bred a love for the queen, and a fear of displeasing her. . . . . All this has since been changed: there is a new face on the State and people; the governour-general has lost all authority; all the commandment of the armies is in their hands." The governour then assigned many pregnant reasons for the withdrawing of love from the English and their queen on part of the Netherlanders, prominent among which were the malpractices of the English in Campveer, Medenblick, and Gertruydenberg, but especially the interference by the English cruisers with their sea-going ships, and the frequent piracies committed on their merchantmen by her Majesty's navy.

Verdugo, although confident in the strength of the place, had represented to Parma and to Mansfeld the immense importance of relieving Coeworden. The city, he said, was more valuable than all the towns taken the year before. All Friesland hung upon it, and it would be impossible to save Groningen should Coeworden fall.

Meantime Count Philip Nassau arrived from the campaign in France with his three regiments which he threw into garrison, and thus set free an equal number of fresh troops, which were forthwith sent to the camp of Maurice.[18] The prince at the same time was made aware that Verdugo was

"The hindrance of their free traffic," he said, "and the despoiling of many of their ships by such as have commission by the queen to go to sea, are what they exclaim against extremely" He paid an honest tribute to the national unity which had grown up in the republic, and to the good administration of their affairs. "Now are the States and the people firmly united," he said; "the soldiers thoroughly contented by the good government of the count and the good payment made to them. . . . . The fear of the king of Spain is almost worn out, their army having now, the third year, almost without opposition kept the field." It was Sidney's opinion that Coeworden would soon fall, after which Groningen would become untenable. Then, without additional expense, the States would be able to take the field with 25,000 men, with which they thought themselves quite capable of holding the king of Spain in play, especially embarked as he was with England and France. "Yet do I not think," he added, "that the States will be willing to have the English companies drawn away, they being, although but few, a great part of the reputation of the army; neither do I think that they would yet be willing to have the contract with her Majesty broken off, because it is one of the principal chains that holds these provinces in union together, and one of the best graces they have with the princes abroad; and because, by the amity with England, they have the free use of the sea by which they live. Though these men be her Majesty's subjects, yet in respect that by the contract they were lent unto them, and that to have them they put their towns into her Majesty's hands, they think they may challenge a great right unto them; and truly I was in a manner asked whether the queen, withdrawing her forces, would still retain the cautionary towns." Truly the question seemed a pertinent one; and it would have been difficult for an honest man to explain why the mortgage should remain when the loan was withdrawn. It needed no Solomon or Daniel to decide so plain a matter, and the States had an uncomfortable habit of insisting on their rights, even in the very face of the English Queen. "These men, how simple show soever they bear outwardly, have hearts high enough," said Sidney; "and look to be respected as they which hold themselves chief rulers of the provinces, which have so long maintained war against the king of Spain, and truly I do not think that secretly anything is so much indigested by them as the little respect as they imagine is had of them in England, and herein they did look that her Majesty should have proceeded by way of intreating with them, as was done two years ago, when Sir John Norris led the first troops into Brittany." Sidney to Burghley, 14 July, 1592. (S. P. Office MS.) Same to same, 4 Aug. 1592. (Ibid.)

[18] Bor, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

about to receive important succour, and he was advised by the deputies of the States-General present at his headquarters to send out his German Reiters to intercept them. Maurice refused. Should his cavalry be defeated, he said, his whole army would be endangered. He determined to await within his fortified camp the attack of the relieving force.

During the whole month of August he proceeded steadily with his sapping and mining. By the middle of the month his lines had come through the ditch, which he drained of water into the counterscarp. By the beginning of September he had got beneath the principal fort, which, in the course of three or four days, he expected to blow into the air. The rainy weather had impeded his operations and the march of the relieving army. Nevertheless that army was at last approaching. The regiments of Mondragon, Charles Mansfeld, Gonzaga, Berlaymont, and Arenberg had been despatched to reinforce Verdugo. On the 23rd August, having crossed the Rhine at Rheinberg, they reached Olfen 23 Aug. in the country of Benthem, ten miles from Coeworden. Here they threw up rockets and made other signals that relief was approaching the town. On the 3rd of September Verdugo, with the whole force at his disposal, amounting to four thousand foot and eighteen hundred horse, was at the village of Emblichen, within a league of the besieged city. That night a peasant was captured with letters from Verdugo to the Governor of Coeworden, giving information that he intended to make an assault on the besiegers on the night of 6th-7th September. 6–7 Sept.

Thus forewarned, Maurice took the best precautions and calmly within his entrenchments awaited the onslaught. Punctual to his appointment, Verdugo with his whole force, yelling "Victoria! Victoria!" made a shirt-attack, or *camiciata*—the men wearing their shirts outside their armour to distinguish each other in the darkness—upon that portion of the camp which was under command of Hohenlo. They were met with determination and repulsed, after fighting all night, with a loss of three hundred killed and a proportionate

number of wounded. The Netherlanders had but three killed and six wounded. Among the latter, however, was Lewis William, who received a musket-ball in the belly, but remained on the ground until the enemy had retreated. It was then discovered that his wound was not mortal—the intestines not having been injured—and he was soon about his work again.[19] Prince Maurice, too, as usual, incurred the remonstrances of the deputies and others for the reckless manner in which he exposed himself wherever the fire was hottest.[20] He resolutely refused, however, to permit his cavalry to follow the retreating enemy. His object was Coeworden—a prize more important than a new victory over the already defeated Spaniards would prove—and this object he kept ever before his eyes.

This was Verdugo's first and last attempt to relieve the city. He had seen enough of the young prince's tactics and had no further wish to break his teeth against those scientific entrenchments. The Spaniards at last, whether they wore their shirts inside or outside their doublets, could no longer handle the Dutchmen at pleasure. That people of butter, as the iron duke of Alva was fond of calling the Netherlanders, were grown harder with the pressure of a twenty-five years' war.

Five days after the sanguinary *camiciata* the besieged offered to capitulate. The trumpet at which the proud Van den Berg had hinted for six months later arrived on the 12th September. Maurice was glad to get his town. His "little soldiers" did not insist, as the Spaniards and Italians were used to do in the good old days, on unlimited murder, rape, and fire, as the natural solace and reward of their labours in the trenches. Civilization had made some

12 Sept.

[19] Bor, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.* "My brother William," wrote Count John to his father, "was shot in the right side, so that the ball came out again near the navel; but, thank God, there is no danger of his life, as all the barbers agree. . . . After he had received the shot he remained more than an hour fighting on horse back and afoot before his wound was bound up, and he could not be induced by any persuasion to leave the ground."—Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, II. s. i. 207, 208.

[20] Bor, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

progress, at least in the Netherlands. Maurice granted good terms, such as he had been in the habit of conceding to all captured towns. Van den Berg was courteously received by his cousins, as he rode forth from the place at the head of what remained of his garrison, five hundred in number, with colours flying, matches burning, bullet in mouth, and with all their arms and baggage except artillery and ammunition, and the heroic little Lewis, notwithstanding the wound in his belly, got on horseback and greeted him with a cousinly welcome in the camp.[21]

The city was a most important acquisition, as already sufficiently set forth, but Queen Elizabeth, much misinformed on this occasion, was inclined to undervalue it. She wrote accordingly to the States, reproaching them for using all that artillery and that royal force against a mere castle and earth-heap, instead of attempting some considerable capital, or going in force to the relief of Brittany.[22] The day was to come when she would acknowledge the advantage of not leaving this earth-heap in the hands of the Spaniard. Meantime, Prince Maurice—the season being so far advanced—gave the world no further practical lessons in the engineering science, and sent his troops into winter quarters.

These were the chief military phenomena in France and Flanders during three years of the great struggle to establish Philip's universal dominion.

[21] Bor, Reyd, Meteren.

[22] "Hasardants vos gens es entreprinses incertaines et de peu de consequence eu esgard que le poids des affaires qui conscernent le bien de notre estat et du votre consiste plus tost a empecher la perte de Bretagne, le recouvrement vous devroit estre beaucoup plus recommandé que de vous attaquer a ung petit chateau tel qu'est Coevorden ou aultre semblable." Queen to the States-General, 23 July, 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

CHAPTER XXVII.

Negotiations between Queen Elizabeth and the States — Aspect of affairs between England and the Netherlands — Complaints of the Hollanders on the piratical acts of the English — The Dutch Envoy and the English Government — Caron's interview with Elizabeth — The Queen promises redress of grievances.

IT is now necessary to cast a glance at certain negotiations on delicate topics which had meantime been occurring between Queen Elizabeth and the States.

England and the republic were bound together by ties so close that it was impossible for either to injure the other without inflicting a corresponding damage on itself. Nevertheless this very community of interest, combined with a close national relationship—for in the European family the Netherlanders and English were but cousins twice removed—with similarity of pursuits, with commercial jealousy, with an intense and ever growing rivalry for that supremacy on the ocean towards which the monarchy and the republic were so earnestly struggling, with a common passion for civil and religious freedom, and with that inveterate habit of self-assertion—the healthful but not engaging attribute of all vigorous nations—which strongly marked them both, was rapidly producing an antipathy between the two countries which time was likely rather to deepen than efface. And the national divergences were as potent as the traits of resemblance in creating this antagonism.

The democratic element was expanding itself in the republic so rapidly as to stifle for a time the oligarchical principle which might one day be developed out of the same matrix; while, despite the hardy and adventurous spirit which characterised the English nation throughout all its grades, there was never a more intensely aristocratic influence in the

world than the governing and directing spirit of the England of that age.

It was impossible that the courtiers of Elizabeth and the burgher-statesmen of Holland and Friesland should sympathize with each other in sentiment or in manner. The republicans in their exuberant consciousness of having at last got rid of kings and kingly paraphernalia in their own land—for since the rejection of the sovereignty offered to France and England in 1585 this feeling had become so predominant as to make it difficult to believe that those offers had been in reality so recent — were insensibly adopting a frankness, perhaps a roughness, of political and social demeanour which was far from palatable to the euphuistic formalists of other countries.

Especially the English statesmen, trained to approach their sovereign with almost Oriental humility, and accustomed to exact for themselves a large amount of deference,[1] could ill brook the free and easy tone occasionally adopted in diplomatic and official intercourse by these upstart republicans. A queen, who to loose morals, imperious disposition, and violent temper united as inordinate a personal vanity as was ever vouchsafed to woman, and who up to the verge of decrepitude was addressed by her courtiers in the language of love-lorn swain to blooming shepherdess,[2] could

[1] The Venetian ambassador Contarini relates that in the reign of James I. the great nobles of England were served at table by lackeys *on their knees*.

[2] Take, for example, among a thousand similar effusions, the language used by Sir Walter Raleigh at exactly the period with which we are now occupied :—

"I that was wont to behold her riding like Alexander, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks, like a nymph ; sometimes sitting in the shade like a goddess, sometimes singing like an angel, sometimes playing like Orpheus. All wounds have scars but those of fantasy, all affections their relenting but those of womankind. All those times past, the loves, the sighs, the sorrows, the desires, can they not weigh down one frail misfortune? Cannot one drop of gall be hidden in so great heaps of sweetness?" &c. &c. &c. "Do with me now therefore what you list—I am weary of life," &c. &c. &c. Sir W. Raleigh to Sir R. Cecil, July, 1592. (Murdin State Papers, ii. 657.) Let it be remembered that the Venus, nymph, goddess, angel, thus adjured for pity, had just turned her sixtieth year.

The Chevalier Du Maurier relates in his memoirs a little incident which he witnessed when residing as a boy near the Hague, his father being then French envoy to the States ; and which indicates that the rustic and uncourtly independence of the repub-

naturally find but little to her taste in the hierarchy of Hans Brewer and Hans Baker. Thus her Majesty and her courtiers, accustomed to the faded gallantries with which the serious affairs of State were so grotesquely intermingled, took it ill when they were bluntly informed, for instance, that the State council of the Netherlands, negotiating on Netherland affairs, could not permit a veto to the representatives of the queen, and that this same body of Dutchmen discussing their own business insisted upon talking Dutch and not Latin.

It was impossible to deny that the young Stadholder was a gentleman of a good house, but how could the insolence of a common citizen like John of Olden-Barneveld be digested? It was certain that behind those shaggy, overhanging brows there was a powerful brain stored with legal and historic lore, which supplied eloquence to an ever-ready tongue and pen. Yet these facts, difficult to gainsay, did not make the demands so frequently urged by the States-General upon the English Government for the enforcement of Dutch rights and the redress of English wrongs the more acceptable.

Bodley, Gilpin, and the rest were in a chronic state of

licans had not diminished with the lapse of a few more years, and with the corresponding increase of popular wealth and strength throughout the commonwealth. The unlucky elector palatine, ex-king of Bohemia, a refugee in Holland since the battle of Prague, was hunting hares in the neighbourhood of Du Maurier's house. In the ardour of the chase, Frederick, having intruded with dogs and horses upon the turnip-field of a wealthy peasant, saw himself pursued with loud cries by the incensed proprietor, accompanied by a very big farm-servant. Both were armed with pitchforks, and the farmer himself presented a truly respectable as well as formidable appearance, dressed as he happened to be in his holiday suit of black Spanish broadcloth, with an under jacket of Florence ratinet, adorned with massive silver buttons. Flourishing his pitchfork, and making no other salutation, he bawled out, "King of Bohemia, King of Bohemia, what do you mean by trampling on my turnips? Don't you know how much pains it costs to plant and to weed them?" The luckless son-in-law of the British sovereign had nothing for it but to apologise for the trespass, and to beat as rapid a retreat before the Dutch farmer as he had recently done before the Duke of Lorraine and the Emperor Ferdinand. Mémoires de Messire Aubery du Maurier, pp. 252, 253.

Perhaps it was as well for the progress of mankind—even at the occasional sacrifice of courtesy to royalty in difficulties—that there should have been a corner of the earth where the theory of natural masters and guardians for the people had already received so rude a shock as in Holland, and where not only the boor but the boor's turnips were safe from being trampled upon. What more poignant satire on human nature than is contained in this very English word boor! The builder, the planter, the creator—the Bauer in short—is made to be identical with the vulgar clown.

exasperation with the Hollanders, not only because of their perpetual complaints, but because their complaints were perpetually just.

The States-General were dissatisfied, all the Netherlanders were dissatisfied—and not entirely without reason—that the English, with whom the republic was on terms not only of friendship but of alliance, should burn their ships on the high seas, plunder their merchants, and torture their sea-captains in order to extort information as to the most precious portions of their cargoes.[3] Sharp language against such malpractices

[3] "Nommement que pardessus ung nombre infini de pilleries, forces et outrages, certain navire de Pierre Piateoz, au commencement de ce mois venant d'Espaigne vers ces Provinces Unies chargé d'une grande somme d'argent et marchandises prácieuses a été forcé, prins et mené a Plymouth par le subject de V. M. le Capitaine Martin Frobisher avec ung aultre navire chargé de sel. Lesquels navires sout tenus comme pour bonne prinse soubs pretexte premièrement, comme nous entendons, que le dict Pierre se seroit mis en defence contre le navire de V. M. lequel il na cognu ny peu cognoistre pour le grand nombre de la diversité des navires mesmes des pirates qui journellement s'aydant en mer du nom des navires et gens de V. M. forcent et pillent les navires et marchandises des inhabitants de ce pays soubs toute couleur et pretexte traictans les mariniers de toutes sortes de tourments. Et secondement qu'ils disent qu'en iceux deux navires auroient este quelques biens et marchandises appartenans aux Espagnols ou autres subjects et tenants le parti des ennemis: le tout contre la verité et dont il n'apparoistra jamais ainsi que le les propriétaires et mariniers disent. Ces practiques et traverses dont ils usent journellement même par menaces, concussions et violences pour fair confesser aux bons gens ce qu'on veuille ou de les constraindre a abandonner leurs biens et marchandises ainsi prinses, sont si notoires et en si grand nombre que nous tenons tout certain qu'elles sont assez cognues et découvertes et indubitablement apparoistront encores avec le temps plus clairement a V. M." &c. &c. &c. States-General to the Queen, 1 Nov. 1590. (Hague Archives MS.)

"Il n'y a chose que nous faisons avecq plus de regret que de molester si souventes fois V. M. par nos plainctes a l'endroict des doleances des marchants de ces pays, des pilleries, dommages et exces que leur font continuellement en mer les subjects d'Icelle par pure force et violence sans cause ny aulcune raison, au lieu de l'ordre et remede qui leur avoit este promis et asseuré. D'aultant que sçavons combien cela doibt desplaire a une Princesse Chrétienne et droicturiere dont V. M. est si renommée par tout le monde. Mais comme voyons les dicts exces s'accroistre journellement en telles exorbitances et plus ni moings si les Anglais s'estoient declarés ennemis de ces pays et faisoient leur equippaige tout expres pour quant nos marchands ruiner, aussi du tout nostre estat, ou du moins par ce moyen le mettre en rage et desespoir du peuple; si comme nous est apparu par verifications légitimes et auctentiques que le 24e du mois de Mai dernier une pinasse nommé le Jeune Lion où estoit capitaine ung appellé Manser et deux aultres navires Anglois dont l'ung avoit nom Susan et estoit commandé par le capitaine Henry, ont sans mot sonner furieusement attaqué par coups d'artillerie et investie ung navire de la Veere appellé le Griphon, qui avoit pour marinier Gole Adrianszoen, parti auparavant de St. Lucas et estoit chargé de grande quantité d'argent, perles et conchenille le quel ils ont entierement spolié et pillé apres qu'ils avoient faict prisonniers et

was considered but proof of democratic vulgarity. Yet it would be hard to maintain that Martin Frobisher, Mansfield, Grenfell, and the rest of the sea-kings, with all their dash and daring and patriotism, were not as unscrupulous pirates as ever sailed blue water, or that they were not apt to commit their depredations upon friend and foe alike.

On the other hand, by a liberality of commerce in extraordinary contrast with the practice of modern times, the Netherlanders were in the habit of trading directly with the arch-enemy of both Holland and England, even in the midst of their conflict with him, and it was complained of that even the munitions of war and the implements of navigation by which Spain had been enabled to effect its foot-hold in Brittany, and thus to threaten the English coast, were derived from this very traffic.[4]

gehenné inhumainement plusieurs de ceulx qui y estoient dedans, les contraignants de signer qu'ils n'avoient prins que dix-sept sacqs d'argent et huict tonneaux de la dicte conchenille en lieu de cent et quinze sacqs, toutes les perles et conchenille; non obstant que le dit maistre marinier leur fait voir qu'ils estoient de la Vere et que le tout appartenoit a des marchands de Zelande," &c. &c. &c. States-General to the Queen, 26 June, 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

"Outre le mescontement que les peuples out par les continuelles larcins et pilleries de la mer par où ils sont entierement aliénez de l'affection quils souloient porter à la nation Anglaise," &c. &c. &c. Noel de Caron to the Lord Treasurer, July, 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

"The merchants of Middleburgh have of late received such losses as they say by our countrymen that her M.'s letter whereby she signifies the release of four ships is not medicine strong enough any way to appease their griefs. They complain of two ships taken on the coast of Portugal worth 30,000*l.* sterling, and the same day I did deliver the queen's letter they had already had news of the taking of four ships more going out of this river worth as they say as much as the other two. These actions make them almost desperate, as I will write more at large unto y^r^ Lo.: upon the return of the deputies, which they of Zeland did send unto Holl^d^ to let them know of these prisals, and to take some course for it. . . . . I am assured that before this happened all the country except Amsterdam were resolved to give contentment unto the queen touching the articles of the traffic. What they will now do I know not, for these things have greatly stirred the humours here, and if it be continued, not unlikely that some inconvenience may happen which in my opinion were good for her M. to foresee, since the profit comes little, as far as I can see, to herself, and the merchants and committee of these towns, who are the men that most affect her M. and her service, will have their hearts alienated from her if they see their goods, which is their life, taken from them by her M.'s subjects, where they look to be protected by her." Sir R. Sidney to Burghley, 29 Oct. 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

[4] "Touchant ce que vous debvriez prohiber le commerce et transportement de vivres et munitions d'icy en Espagne. Qui est une chose practiqué aussi ouvertement et hardiment par certains marchands de Hollande et Zelande que s'il ny avoit point d'inimitie entre les Espaignols et eux.

The Hollanders replied that, according to their contract with England, they were at liberty to send as many as forty or fifty vessels at a time to Spain and Portugal, that they had never exceeded the stipulated number, that England freely engaged in the same traffic herself with the common enemy, that it was not reasonable to consider cordage or dried fish or shooks and staves, butter, eggs, and corn as contraband of war, that if they were illegitimate the English trade was vitiated to the same degree, and that it would be utterly hopeless for the provinces to attempt to carry on the war, except by enabling themselves, through the widest and most unrestricted foreign commerce, even including the enemy's realms, to provide their nation with the necessary wealth to sustain so gigantic a conflict.[5]

Tellement que si les navires du Roy en Biscaye et Gallice Cales et aultres parties méridionales d'Espagne n'eussent point este fournis l'an passé et ce printems de poudre et de cordage par les marchands de ces pays cy, n'auroit peu envoyer aulcunes forces en Bretagne. Or sur ces vostres procedures et aultres semblables le roy de France et ses conseillers, le Prince Dombes son lieutenant en Bretagne et son ambassadeur en Angleterre, et de faict tous hommes en general tant princes qu'aultres qui ont la commune cause en recommendation, se plaignent grandement tous les jours et addressent leurs plaintes a S. M. presumans qu'elle ayant pris la protection de ces pays cy pourroit et debvroit par ses moyens et authorité redresser ung si notoire desordre pour la preservation d'elle mesme et de tous ceux qui sont touchez en mesme cas. Mesmes dans ce peu de jours ledict Ambassadeur a informé S. M. d'une grande quantité de munitions porté à S. Malo et Nantes en Bretagne et de plus de 20 navires chargés de blé et de quelque provision de poudre. . . . . Ces actions illicites rendent S. M. tellement offensée qu'elle pense avoir cause de se repentir d'avoir oncques pris la defence de ces pays contre le Roy d'Espagne, considerant que les armes et les forces d'Icelluy par beaucoup d'années ont été entretenues et maintenues en ces Pays Bas par le commun transportement de vivres et fourniture de guerre à icelles qui s'est faict par permission et licence d'icy," &c. &c. &c. Bodley to the States-General, 2 June, 1591. (Hague Archives, MS.)

"Quand vous aultres pour vos advantages particuliers laissez fournir de toutes sortes de commodites le dict ennemi commun et puissant, et a ceste heure mesme que pour l'amour de vous nous sommes forecloso de tout commerce à la ruine totale de plusieurs de nos subjects, lesquels comme ils nous ont este plus chers que la vie ainsi ne pouvons que nous ressentir de leurs plaintes touchant les traffiques qui se font journellement soubz des noms empruntés et simuléz, ce qui s'est directement découvert," &c. &c. &c. Queen to the States-General, 13 Feb. 1593. (Hague Archives MS.)

[5] "Nous n'avons encore peu persuader à V. M. combien le transport de quelques vivres ensemble la navigation et trafficq avecq et vers le pays de West importent au bien et conservation de nostre estat. Car ny ayant mine d'or ni d'autre metal es dicts pays dont l'on pourroit tirer les frais d'icelle guerre, d'àultre part l'affluence annuelle que Dieu y donne de beurre, fromage et quelques autres vivres, y estant par Sa divine grace si abondante que la dixieme part ny peult estre consumée, et la multitude du peuple

Here were ever flowing fountains of bitterest discussion

addonné au trafficque et manufacture y estant grande et si independante que faisant tant seulement le moindre semblant de les y vouloir empescher, la plus grande partie d'iceux s'en departiroit vers les pays voisins tirant quand a eulx une infinité de navires et mariniers comme l'expérience à assez montré mesme du tems du dit feu Monsr le Comte de Leycester que nous peult on imputer que les beneficions et en tirons les moyens de nostre conservation? L'on nous objecte que les notres vont querir les grains en Oostlande et les meinent vers les pays de West subjects a l'ennemy, qu' icelluy s'en nourrit et fortifie. Nous le croions, mais l'on ne nous sauroit persuader (encores que la trafficq des nostres cessat) que ceulx d'Oostlande vouldroient ou pourraient laisser perir l'abondance des grains y croissant annuellemente (qui sont presque l'unicque moyen de leur trafficq et soutien de leur vie) et que sachant qu'ailleurs y en auroit disette et traitte, eux et autres marchants et mariniers de divers royaumes et pays ne les y transportent et ny a apparence de la leur pouvoir empescher (quant ce ne servit que pour le gaing exorbitant et commoditez qu'ils en tirent) non plus que d'empescher le Roy d'Espagne de s'en faire pouvoir à quelque prix que ce fust d'illecq ou d'ailleurs. Et dependant le transport de grains estrangers d'icy, que deviendra si grande quantité qui y est? puisque par le grace de Dieu ces pays en produisent aultant et plus qu'il en fault pour la nourriture des manans d'iceulx. Et qui croira qu'on y amenera d'aultres pour y demourer estabiiz comme en ung sacq en peril de sy gaster . . . Cependant cesseroient les convois et licentes d'entrée et issue (principal revenu de ces pays) et les marchants et mariniers qui n'ont aultre moyen de vivre et nourrir leurs femmes et enfans se transporteroient avec leur navires en Danemark, Norweghen, Hambourg, Dansig, voire memes en Pologne et ailleurs. . . . . Dont ensuivroit non seulement tres grande diminution des imports et autres moyens destines pour l'entretien de la guerre, mais aussi transport et alienation des navires et mariniers (principale force de ces pays). . . . . Il faut que ce n'est pas par gaieté de cœur que toutes nos terres, maisons rentes et aultres bien immeubles, mesmes aussi du bestail, nous paions liberalement une grande partie du fruit et revenu d'iceulx et que de nostre manger, boire, vestemens, chauffage et autres consumptions pardessus le *prix nous payons pour impots presque la valeur d'icelles.* Et toutes fois tout cela n'est bastant pour en fournir la moitié des frais de notre guerre sans y comprendre une infinité de dettes es quelles le pays demeure obligé pardessus toutes autres charges, que les provinces supportent a l'entretien de leurs dicques escluses et dependances contre les *inondations des rivieres et de la mer contre lesquels ils soutiennent aussi comme une continuelle guerre.* . . . . . Il est evident qu'il importe singulierement pour la conservation de ces dits pays et service de la cause commune que la navigation et trafficque des dits vivres demeurent libres. Et supplions tres humblement qu'il plaise a V. M. donner l'ordre que convient à ce que au dehors et contre icelluy placcart ladite navigation trafficq et transport ne soient par ses subjects aucunement empeschez ou soubs quelque pretexte que ce soit retardés, mesmes aussy de vouloir relaxer et indemner ceux qui sont encore empesches et endommagés," &c. &c. &c. States-General to the Queen, 4 May, 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

"Dat de staten eens met haer geaccordeert waren dat zy maer veertig ofte vyftig schepen teffens en zouden zenden. . . . . Nochtaens dat ick haere Mat. mochte verzekeren datter geen vyftig schepen in alle de vlote naer Spagnien en wilden, &c. &c. . . . . Want ick haer verzekerde dat ons Land (Got lof) treffelycke Coepluyden hadde die t' in allen eecken van der werelt besochten. Dat selfs haere natie met donse in Spaignien trafficqueerde ende dat donse onder de namen van de Oosterlinghen Deynen ende andersints moesten trafficqueren, anders dat zy in groot peryckel waren als zy ontdekt wierden," &c. &c. &c. Caron to the States-General, 18 Nov. 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

and recrimination. It must be admitted however that there was occasionally an advantage in the despotic and summary manner in which the queen took matters into her own hands. It was refreshing to see this great sovereign—who was so well able to grapple with questions of State, and whose very imperiousness of temper impelled her to trample on shallow sophistries and specious technicalities—dealing directly with cases of piracy and turning a deaf ear to the counsellors, who in that, as in every age, were too prone to shove by international justice in order to fulfil municipal forms.

It was, however, with much difficulty that the envoy of the republic was able to obtain a direct hearing from her Majesty in order to press the long list of complaints on account of the English piratical proceedings upon her attention. He intimated that there seemed to be special reasons why the great ones about her throne were disposed to deny him access to the queen, knowing as they did in what intent he asked for interviews. They described in strong language the royal wrath at the opposition recently made by the States to detaching the English auxiliaries in the Netherlands for the service of the French king in Normandy, hoping thereby to deter him from venturing into her presence with a list of grievances on the part of his government. "I did my best to indicate the danger incurred by such transferring of troops at so critical a moment," said Noel de Caron, "showing that it was directly in opposition to the contract made with her Majesty. But I got no answer save very high words from the Lord Treasurer, to the effect that the States-General were never willing to agree to any of her Majesty's propositions, and that this matter was as necessary to the States' service as to that of the French king. In effect, he said peremptorily that her Majesty willed it and would not recede from her resolution." [6]

The envoy then requested an interview with the queen before her departure into the country.

[6] "In effecte zeyde absolutelycken dat Haer Mat. die begeerde, ende van der resolutie niet soude afstaen."—Caron to the States-General, 30 July, 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

Next day, at noon, Lord Burghley sent word that she was
28 July, to leave between five and six o'clock that evening,
1592. and that the minister would be welcome meantime at any hour.

"But notwithstanding that I presented myself," said Caron, "at two o'clock in the afternoon, I was unable to speak to her Majesty until a moment before she was about to mount her horse. Her language was then very curt. She persisted in demanding her troops, and strongly expressed her dissatisfaction that we should have refused them on what she called so good an occasion for using them. I was obliged to cut my replies very short, as it was already between six and seven o'clock, and she was to ride nine English miles to the place where she was to pass the night. I was quite sensible, however, that the audience was arranged to be thus brief, in order that I should not be able to stop long enough to give trouble, and perhaps to find occasion to renew our complaints touching the plunderings and robberies committed upon us at sea. This is what some of the great personages here, without doubt, are afraid of, for they were wonderfully well overhauled in my last audience. I shall attempt to speak to her again before she goes very deep into the country."[1]

It was not however before the end of the year, after Caron had made a voyage to Holland and had returned, that he
14 Nov. was able to bring the subject thoroughly before
1592. her Majesty. On the 14th November he had preliminary interviews with the Lord High Admiral and the Lord Treasurer at Hampton Court, where the queen was then residing. The plundering business was warmly discussed between himself and the Admiral, and there was much quibbling and special pleading in defence of the practices which had created so much irritation and pecuniary loss in Holland. There was a good deal of talk about want of evi-

[1] Caron to the States-General, 30 July, 1592. "Emmers ick hebbe wel gevoelt dat deze audientie voor my zoo cort geapposteert was omme dat ick haer niet te lange zoude blyven troubleren ende mischien occasie crygen om onse clagten nopende de plonderingen ende roverien ter zee te vernyeuwen twelck sommige groote allhier zonder twyffel vreesen. Want zy wonderlycken zeer overhaelt wierden in myne leste audientie," &c. &c.

dence and conflict of evidence, which, to a man who felt as sure of the facts and of the law as the Dutch envoy did—unless it were according to public law for one friend and ally to plunder and burn the vessels of another friend and ally—was not encouraging as to the probable issue of his interview with her Majesty. It would be tedious to report the conversation as fully as it was laid by Noel de Caron before the States-General; but at last the admiral expressed a hope that the injured parties would be able to make good their case. At any rate he assured the envoy that he would take care of Captain Mansfield for the present, who was in prison with two other captains, so that proceedings might be had against them if it was thought worth while.[8]

Caron answered with Dutch bluntness. "I recommended him very earnestly to do this," he said, "and told him roundly that this was by all means necessary for the sake of his own honour. Otherwise no man could ever be made to believe that his Excellency was not seeking to get his own profit out of the affair. But he vehemently swore and protested that this was not the case." [9]

He then went to the Lord Treasurer's apartment, where a long and stormy interview followed on the subject of the withdrawal of the English troops. Caron warmly insisted that the measure had been full of danger for the States; that they had been ordered out of Prince Maurice's camp at a most critical moment; that, had it not been for the Stadholder's promptness and military skill, very great disasters to the common cause must have ensued; and that, after all, nothing had been done by the contingent in any other field, for they had been for six months idle and sick, without ever reaching Brittany at all.

"The Lord Treasurer, who, contrary to his custom," said

[8] Caron to the States-General, 18 Nov. 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

[9] "Ick hebbe hem tzelve zeer ernstelycken gerecommandeert ende dem rondelyck uitgeseyt dat zulex om zyn eerewille allesints betaemde anders dat men nyemant en soude connen doen gelooven oft zyne E. en zoude willen in dese zaecke zyne prouffit gedoen. Zoo hy hoochelyken swoer ende protesteerde dat hy niet en hadde nochte oock en zoude willen doen." Ibid.

the envoy, "had been listening thus long to what I had to say, now observed that the States had treated her Majesty very ill, that they had kept her running after her own troops nearly half a year, and had offered no excuse for their proceedings." [10]

It would be superfluous to repeat the arguments by which Caron endeavoured to set forth that the English troops, sent to the Netherlands according to a special compact, for a special service, and for a special consideration and equivalent, could not honestly be employed, contrary to the wishes of the States-General, upon a totally different service and in another country. The queen willed it, he was informed, and it was ill-treatment of her Majesty on the part of the Hollanders to oppose her will. This argument was unanswerable.

Soon afterwards, Caron was admitted to the presence of Elizabeth. He delivered, at first, a letter from the States-General, touching the withdrawal of the troops. The queen instantly broke the seal and read the letter to the end. Coming to the concluding passage, in which the States observed that they had great and just cause highly to complain on that subject, she paused, reading the sentences over twice or thrice, and then remarked:

"Truly these are comical people.[11] I have so often been complaining that they refused to send my troops, and now the States complain that they are obliged to let them go. Yet my intention is only to borrow them for a little while, because I can give my brother of France no better succour than by sending him these soldiers, and this I consider better than if I should send him four thousand men. I say again, I am only borrowing them, and surely the States ought never to make such complaints, when the occasion was such a favourable one, and they had received already sufficient aid from these troops, and had liberated their whole country. I don't comprehend these grievances. They complain that I with-

[10] Caron to the States-General, 18 Nov. 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

[11] "Voor waer zy zyn schacke luyden." Ibid. The conversation was of course in French, but as the envoy made his report to the States-General in Dutch, it is not possible to give the exact words which the queen used. It may be rendered crafty, queer, droll, cunning, or funny.

draw my people, and meantime they are still holding them and have brought them ashore again. They send me frivolous excuses that the skippers don't know the road to my islands, which is, after all, as easy to find as the way to Caen, for it is all one. I have also sent my own pilots ; and I complain bitterly that by making this difficulty they will cause the loss of all Brittany. They run with their people far away from me, and meantime they allow the enemy to become master of all the coasts lying opposite me. But if it goes badly with me they will rue it deeply themselves." [12]

There was considerable reason, even if there were but little justice, in this strain of remarks. Her Majesty continued it for some little time longer, and it is interesting to see the direct and personal manner in which this great princess handled the weightiest affairs of state. The transfer of a dozen companies of English infantry from Friesland to Brittany was supposed to be big with the fate of France, England, and the Dutch republic, and was the subject of long and angry controversy, not as a contested point of principle, in regard to which numbers, of course, are nothing, but as a matter of practical and pressing importance.

" Her Majesty made many more observations of this nature," said Caron, " but without getting at all into a passion, and, in my opinion, her discourse was sensible, and she spoke with more moderation than she is wont at other times." [13]

The envoy then presented the second letter from the States-General in regard to the outrages inflicted on the Dutch merchantmen. The queen read it at once, and expressed herself as very much displeased with her people. She said that she had received similar information from Counsellor Bodley, who had openly given her to understand that the enormous outrages which her people were committing at sea upon the Netherlanders were a public scandal. It had made her so angry, she said, that she knew not which

[12] Caron to the States-General, 18 Nov. 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

[13] " Doch sonder haer eenighsints te moveren, dan naer myns bedunkens discours gewys ende veel meerder moderatie dan zy op ander tyden wel was gewoon." Ibid.

way to turn. She would take it in hand at once, for she would rather make oath never more to permit a single ship of war to leave her ports than consent to such thieveries and villanies. She told Caron that he would do well to have his case in regard to these matters verified, and then to give it into her own hands, since otherwise it would all be denied her and she would find herself unable to get at the truth.[14]

"I have all the proofs and documents of the merchants by me," replied the envoy, "and, moreover, several of the sea-captains who have been robbed and outraged have come over with me, as likewise some merchants who were tortured by burning of the thumbs and other kinds of torments."[15]

This disturbed the queen very much, and she expressed her wish that Caron should not allow himself to be put off with delays by the council, but should insist upon all due criminal punishment, the infliction of which she promised in the strongest terms to order; for she could never enjoy peace of mind, she said, so long as such scoundrels were tolerated in her kingdom.[16]

The envoy had brought with him a summary of the cases, with the names of all the merchants interested, and a list of all the marks on the sacks of money which had been stolen. The queen looked over it very carefully, declaring it to be her intention that there should be no delays interposed in the conduct of this affair by forms of special pleading, but that

[14] "Ende haer zeer tonvreden gehouden jegens haer volck, seyde oock diergelyck verstaen te hebben van den Raetsheer Bodley die haer opentlycken adverteerde dat het een open schandael was te verstaen d'enorme stukken die haer volck ter zee op de onsen waren doende, twelck (soo sy seyde) haer zoo tornich gemaeckt hadde datse niet wiste waer haer keeren,datse oock eens voor haer zoude nemen ende liever versweren nimmermeer meer te consenteren eenich schip van oorlogen te laten uitgaen dan occasie van zulkce dievereyen ende schelmeryen te consenteren, dat ick daeromme wel zoude doen myn zaecke in dit regard te doen verifieren, ende t'zelve haer in handen te geven, want anders men tzelve haer al ontkende ende daer geensints tuschen en conste geraeken." Caron to the States-General, 18 Nov. 1592.

[15] "Ick zedye aen haere Ma^{t} dat ick alle de bewysen ende documenten van de coopluyden by my hadde, oyck mede datter eenige schippers die men berooft ende geoultrageert hadde met my waren gecommen,oock coopluyden die men de duymen hadde gebrant ende andere tormenten van pynigen aen hadde gedaen, twelck haer oock zeer ontstelde," &c. &c. &c. Ibid.

[16] "Seggende dat zy ingerustiche yt niet conde geleven als men zulcke schelmen in haer Rycke langer zoude verdragen." Ibid.

speedy cognizance should be taken of the whole, and that the property should forthwith be restored.[17]

She then sent for Sir Robert Cecil, whom she directed to go at once and tell his father, the Lord Treasurer, that he was to assist Caron in this affair exactly as if it were her own. It was her intention, she said, that her people were in no wise to trouble the Hollanders in legitimate mercantile pursuits. She added that it was not enough for her people to say that they had only been seizing Spaniards' goods and money, but she meant that they should prove it, too, or else they should swing for it.[18]

Caron assured her Majesty that he had no other commission from his masters than to ask for justice, and that he had no instructions to claim Spanish property or enemy's goods. He had brought sufficient evidence with him, he said, to give her Majesty entire satisfaction.

It is not necessary to pursue the subject any farther. The great nobles still endeavoured to interpose delays, and urged the propriety of taking the case before the common courts of law. Caron, strong in the support of the queen, insisted that it should be settled, as her Majesty had commanded, by the council, and it was finally arranged that the judge of admiralty should examine the evidence on both sides, and then communicate the documents at once to the Lord Treasurer. Meantime the money was to be deposited with certain aldermen of London, and the accused parties kept in prison. The ultimate decision was then to be made by the council, "not by form of process but by commission thereto ordained."[19] In the course of the many interviews which followed between the Dutch envoy and the privy counsellors, the Lord Admiral

[17] Caron to the States-General, 18 Nov. 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

[18] "Dede dien volgende roupen Sir Robert Cecil die zy belaste aen den Tresorier zynen vader te gaen zeggen dat hy my hierinne zoude assisteren al oft haer eygen zaecke waere, want haere intentie (zoo zy zeyde) niet en was dat men ons eenigsins in onse coophandelinge soude troubleren als wy daerinne op recht handelden. Seyde oock dat haer niet genoeck en was dat haer volck zeyde dat se Spaignaerts gelt ende goet geattrapeert hadden, maer verstont dat zy tzelve zouden doen blycken ofte met haren hals betaelen." Ibid.

[19] Ibid. Also Caron to States-General, 12 Dec. 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

stated that an English merchant residing in the Netherlands had sent to offer him a present of two thousand pounds sterling, in case the affair should be decided against the Hollanders. He communicated the name of the individual to Caron, under seal of secrecy, and reminded the Lord Treasurer that he too had seen the letter of the Englishman. Lord Burghley observed that he remembered the fact that certain letters had been communicated to him by the Lord Admiral, but that he did not know from whence they came, nor anything about the person of the writer.[20]

The case of the plundered merchants was destined to drag almost as slowly before the council as it might have done in the ordinary tribunals, and Caron was "kept running," as he expressed it, "from the court to London, and from London to the court," and it was long before justice was done to the sufferers.[21] Yet the energetic manner in which the queen took the case into her own hands, and the intense indignation with which she denounced the robberies and outrages which had been committed by her subjects upon her friends and allies, were effective in restraining such wholesale piracy in the future.

On the whole, however, if the internal machinery is examined by which the masses of mankind were moved at this epoch in various parts of Christendom, we shall not find much reason to applaud the conformity of Governments to the principles of justice, reason, or wisdom.

[20] "Den grooten Admirael began wederomme te seggen van zyne advertentien die hy op dit stuck selfs hadde gecrygen uit Zeelant, dat eenige Coopluyden hem hadden doen presenteren twee duysent pond sterlincx, seggende totten grooten Tresorier dat hy hem selfs de brieven hadde gecommuniceert die darop antwoorde wel brieven gesien te hebben, maer wiste niet van wiens die quamen doerdien hy den persoon die dezelve gescreven hadde niet en kende, vraegde daeromme van wat natie hy was, den Admirael zeyde dat het een Engelsch Coopman was die hy oock noemde. Doch dede my erst belooven dat ick hem niet en zoude willen ontdecken, zal daeromme synen naem hier naergelaten worden, ter wylen ick oock tzelve alsoo beloofde, maer hocht ans adviseren zulcke ordre daerinno te stellen als den dienst van den lande wel is verheyschende. Den Admirael zeyde oock dat hy wel wiste dat den zelven Coopman alreede derwaerts over in dangiere hadde geweest, twelck my dede antwoorden dat hy dan voer dees tyt voor sulcx most wesen bekant." Report of Caron to the States-General. 10 Dec. 1592. (Hague Archives MS.)

[21] Letters and reports of Caron, *passim*. Ibid.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Influence of the rule and character of Philip II. — Heroism of the sixteenth century — Contest for the French throne — Character and policy of the Duke of Mayenne — Escape of the Duke of Guise from Castle Tours — Propositions for the marriage of the Infanta — Plotting of the Catholic party. — Grounds of Philip's pretensions to the crown of France — Motives of the Duke of Parma maligned by Commander Moreo — He justifies himself to the king — View of the private relations between Philip and the Duke of Mayenne and their sentiments towards each other — Disposition of the French politicians and soldiers towards Philip — Peculiar commercial pursuits of Philip — Confused state of affairs in France — Treachery of Philip towards the Duke of Parma — Recall of the duke to Spain — His sufferings and death.

THE People—which has been generally regarded as something naturally below its rulers, and as born to be protected and governed, paternally or otherwise, by an accidental selection from its own species, which by some mysterious process has shot up much nearer to heaven than itself—is often described as brutal, depraved, self-seeking, ignorant, passionate, licentious, and greedy.

It is fitting, therefore, that its protectors should be distinguished, at great epochs of the world's history, by an absence of such objectionable qualities.

It must be confessed, however, that if the world had waited for heroes—during the dreary period which followed the expulsion of something that was called Henry III. of France from the gates of his capital, and especially during the time that followed hard upon the decease of that embodiment of royalty—its axis must have ceased to turn for a long succession of years. The Béarnese was at least alive, and a man. He played his part with consummate audacity and skill; but alas for an epoch or a country in which such a shape—notwithstanding all its engaging and even commanding qualities—is looked upon as an incarnation of human greatness!

But the chief mover of all things—so far as one man can be prime mover—was still the diligent scribe who lived in the Escorial. It was he whose high mission it was to blow the bellows of civil war, and to scatter curses over what had once been the smiling abodes of human creatures, throughout the leading countries of Christendom. The throne of France was vacant, nominally as well as actually, since the year 1589. During two-and-twenty years preceding that epoch he had scourged the provinces, once constituting the richest and most enlightened portions of his hereditary domains, upon the theory that without the Spanish Inquisition no material prosperity was possible on earth, nor any entrance permitted to the realms of bliss beyond the grave. Had every Netherlander consented to burn his Bible, and to be burned himself should he be found listening to its holy precepts if read to him in shop, cottage, farm-house, or castle; and had he furthermore consented to renounce all the liberal institutions which his ancestors had earned, in the struggle of centuries, by the sweat of their brows and the blood of their hearts; his benignant proprietor and master, who lived at the ends of the earth, would have consented at almost any moment to peace. His arms were ever open. Let it not be supposed that this is the language of sarcasm or epigram. Stripped of the decorous sophistications by which human beings are so fond of concealing their naked thoughts from each other, this was the one simple dogma always propounded by Philip. Grimace had done its worst, however, and it was long since it had exercised any power in the Netherlands. The king and the Dutchmen understood each other; and the plain truths with which those republicans answered the imperial proffers of mediation, so frequently renewed, were something new, and perhaps not entirely unwholesome in diplomacy.

It is not an inviting task to abandon the comparatively healthy atmosphere of the battle-field, the blood-stained swamp, the murderous trench—where human beings, even if communing only by bullets and push of pike, were at least

dealing truthfully with each other—and to descend into those subterranean regions where the effluvia of falsehood becomes almost too foul for ordinary human organisation.

Heroes in those days, in any country, there were few. William the Silent was dead. De la Noue was dead. Duplessis-Mornay was living, but his influence over his royal master was rapidly diminishing. Cecil, Hatton, Essex, Howard, Raleigh, James Croft, Valentine Dale, John Norris, Roger Williams, the "Virgin Queen" herself—does one of these chief agents in public affairs, or do all of them together, furnish a thousandth part of that heroic whole which the England of the sixteenth century presents to every imagination? Maurice of Nassau—excellent soldier and engineer as he had already proved himself—had certainly not developed much of the heroic element, although thus far he was walking straightforward like a man, in the path of duty, with the pithy and substantial Lewis William ever at his side. Olden-Barneveld—tough burgher-statesman, hard-headed, indomitable man of granite—was doing more work, and doing it more thoroughly, than any living politician, but he was certainly not of the mythological brotherhood who inhabit the serene regions of space beyond the moon. He was not the son of god or goddess, destined, after removal from this sphere, to shine with planetary lustre, among other constellations, upon the scenes of mortal action. Those of us who are willing to rise—or to descend if the phrase seems wiser—to the idea of a self-governing people must content ourselves, for this epoch, with the fancy of a hero-people and a people-king.

A plain little republic, thrusting itself uninvited into the great political family-party of heaven-anointed sovereigns and long-descended nobles, seemed a somewhat repulsive phenomenon. It became odious and dangerous when by the blows it could deal in battle, the logic it could chop in council, it indicated a remote future for the world, in which right-divine and regal paraphernalia might cease to be as effective stage-properties as they had always been considered.

Yet it will be difficult for us to find the heroic individualised very perceptibly at this period, look where we may. Already there seemed ground for questioning the comfortable fiction that the accidentally dominant families and castes were by nature wiser, better, braver than that much-contemned entity, the People. What if the fearful heresy should gain ground that the People was at least as wise, honest, and brave as its masters? What if it should become a recognised fact that the great individuals and castes, whose wealth and station furnished them with ample time and means for perfecting themselves in the science of government, were rather devoting their leisure to the systematic filling of their own pockets than to the hiving up of knowledge for the good of their fellow creatures? What if the whole theory of hereditary superiority should suddenly exhale? What if it were found out that we were all fellow-worms together, and that those which had crawled highest were not necessarily the least slimy?

Meantime it will be well for us, in order to understand what is called the Past, to scrutinise somewhat closely that which was never meant to be revealed. To know the springs which once controlled the world's movements, one must ponder the secret thoughts, purposes, aspirations, and baffled attempts of the few dozen individuals who once claimed that world in fee simple. Such researches are not in a cheerful field; for the sources of history are rarely fountains of crystal, bubbling through meadows of asphodel. Vast and noisome are the many sewers which have ever run beneath decorous Christendom.

Some of the leading military events in France and Flanders, patent to all the world, which grouped themselves about the contest for the French throne, as the central point in the history of Philip's proposed world-empire, have already been indicated.

It was a species of triangular contest—so far as the chief actors were concerned—for that vacant throne. Philip, Mayenne, Henry of Navarre, with all the adroitness which each possessed, were playing for the splendid prize.

Of Philip it is not necessary to speak. The preceding volumes of this work have been written in vain, if the reader has not obtained from irrefragable testimony—the monarch's own especially—a sufficient knowledge of that human fetish before which so much of contemporary humanity grovelled.

The figure of Navarre is also one of the most familiar shapes in history.

As for the Duke of Mayenne, he had been, since the death of his brother the Balafré, ostensible leader of the League, and was playing, not without skill, a triple game.

Firstly, he hoped for the throne for himself.

Secondly, he was assisting the King of Spain to obtain that dignity.

Thirdly, he was manœuvring in dull, dumb, but not ineffective manner, in favour of Navarre.

So comprehensive and self-contradictory a scheme would seem to indicate an elasticity of principle and a fertility of resource not often vouchsafed to man.

Certainly one of the most pregnant lessons of history is furnished in the development of these cabals, nor is it, in this regard, of great importance whether the issue was to prove them futile or judicious. It is sufficient for us now, that when those vanished days constituted the Present—the vital atmosphere of Christendom—the world's affairs were controlled by those plotters and their subordinates, and it is therefore desirable for us to know what manner of men they were, and how they played their parts.

Nor should it ever be forgotten that the leading motive with all was supposed to be religion. It was to maintain the supremacy of the Roman Church, or to vindicate, to a certain extent, liberty of conscience, through the establishment of a heterodox organisation, that all these human beings of various lineage and language throughout Christendom had been cutting each other's throats for a quarter of a century.

Mayenne was not without courage in the field when he found himself there, but it was observed of him that he spent more time at table than the Béarnese in sleep, and that he

was so fat as to require the assistance of twelve men to put him in the saddle again whenever he fell from his horse. Yet slow fighter as he was, he was a most nimble intriguer. As for his private character, it was notoriously stained with every vice, nor was there enough of natural intelligence or superior acquirement to atone for his crapulous, licentious, shameless life. His military efficiency at important emergencies was impaired and his life endangered by vile diseases. He was covetous and greedy beyond what was considered decent even in that cynical age. He received subsidies and alms with both hands from those who distrusted and despised him, but who could not eject him from his advantageous position.

He wished to arrive at the throne of France. As son of Francis of Guise, as brother of the great Balafré, he considered himself entitled to the homage of the fishwomen and the butchers' halls. The constitution of the country in that age making a People impossible, the subtle connection between a high-born intriguer and the dregs of a populace, which can only exist in societies of deep chasms and precipitous contrasts, was easily established.

The duke's summary dealing with the sixteen tyrants of Paris in the matter of the president's murder had, however, loosened his hold on what was considered the democracy; but this was at the time when his schemes were silently swinging towards the Protestant aristocracy; at the moment when Politica was taking the place of Madam League in his secret affections. Nevertheless, so long as there seemed a chance, he was disposed to work the mines for his own benefit. His position as lieutenant-general gave him an immense advantage for intriguing with both sides, and—in case his aspirations for royalty were baffled—for obtaining the highest possible price for himself in that auction in which Philip and the Béarnese were likely to strain all their resources in outbidding each other.

On one thing his heart was fixed. His brother's son should at least not secure the golden prize if he could prevent it. The

young Duke of Guise, who had been immured in Castle Tours since the famous murder of his father and uncle, had made his escape by a rather neat stratagem. Having been allowed some liberty for amusing himself in the corridors in the neighbourhood of his apartment, he had invented a game of hop, skip, and jump up stairs and down, which he was wont to play with the soldiers of the guard, as a solace to the tediousness of confinement. One day he hopped and skipped up the staircase with a rapidity which excited the admiration of the companions of his sport, slipped into his room, slammed and bolted the doors, and when the guard, after in vain waiting a considerable time for him to return and resume the game, at last forced an entrance, they found the bird flown out of window. Rope-ladders, confederates, fast-galloping post-horses did the rest, and at last the young duke joined his affectionate uncle in camp, much to that eminent relative's discomfiture.[1] Philip gave alternately conflicting instructions to Farnese—sometimes that he should encourage the natural jealousy between the pair; sometimes that he should cause them to work harmoniously together for the common good—that common good being the attainment by the King of Spain of the sovereignty of France.

But it was impossible, as already intimated, for Mayenne to work harmoniously with his nephew. The Duke of Guise might marry with the Infanta and thus become King of France by the grace of God and Philip. To such a consummation in the case of his uncle there stood, as we know, an insuperable obstacle in the shape of the Duchess of Mayenne. Should it come to this at last, it was certain that the Duke would make any and every combination to frustrate such a scheme. Meantime he kept his own counsel, worked amicably with Philip, Parma, and the young duke, and received money in overflowing measure, and poured into his bosom, from that Spanish monarch whose veterans in the Netherlands were maddened by starvation into mutiny.

Philip's plans were a series of alternatives. France he

[1] De Thou, xi.

regarded as the property of his family. Of that there could be no doubt at all. He meant to put the crown upon his own head, unless the difficulties in the way should prove absolutely insuperable. In that case he claimed France and all its inhabitants as the property of his daughter. The Salic law was simply a pleasantry, a bit of foolish pedantry, an absurdity. If Clara Isabella, as daughter of Isabella of France, as grandchild of Henry II., were not manifestly the owner of France—queen-proprietary, as the Spanish doctors called it —then there was no such thing, so he thought, as inheritance of castle, farm-house, or hovel—no such thing as property anywhere in the world. If the heiress of the Valois could not take that kingdom as her private estate, what security could there ever be for any possessions public or private?

This was logical reasoning enough for kings and their counsellors. There was much that might be said, however, in regard to special laws. There was no doubt that great countries, with all their live-stock—human or otherwise—belonged to an individual, but it was not always so clear who that individual was. This doubt gave much work and comfortable fees to the lawyers. There was much learned lore concerning statutes of descent, cutting off of entails, actions for ejectment, difficulties of enforcing processes, and the like, to occupy the attention of diplomatists, politicians and other sages. It would have caused general hilarity, however, could it have been suggested that the live-stock had art or part in the matter; that sheep, swine, or men could claim a choice of their shepherds and butchers.

Philip—humbly satisfied, as he always expressed himself, so long as the purity of the Roman dogmas and the supremacy of the Romish Church over the whole earth were maintained—affected a comparative indifference as to whether he should put the crown of St. Louis and of Hugh Capet upon his own grey head or whether he should govern France through his daughter and her husband. Happy the man who might exchange the symbols of mutual affection with Philip's daughter.

The king had various plans in regard to the bestowal of the hand thus richly endowed. First and foremost it was suggested—and the idea was not held too monstrous to be even believed in by some conspicuous individuals—that he proposed espousing his daughter himself. The pope was to be relied on, in this case, to give a special dispensation. Such a marriage, between parties too closely related to be usually united in wedlock, might otherwise shock the prejudices of the orthodox. His late niece and wife was dead, so that there was no inconvenience on that score, should the interests of his dynasty, his family, and, above all, of the Church, impel him, on mature reflection, to take for his fourth marriage one step farther within the forbidden degrees than he had done in his third. Here is the statement, which, if it have no other value, serves to show the hideous designs of which the enemies of Philip sincerely believed that monarch capable.

"But God is a just God," wrote Sir Edward Stafford, "and if with all things past, that be true that *the king* (*videlicet* Henry IV.) *yesterday assured me to be true*, and that both his ambassador from Venice writ to him and Monsieur de Luxembourg from Rome, that the Count Olivarez had made a great instance to the pope (Sixtus V.) a little afore his death, to permit his master to marry his daughter, no doubt God will not leave it long unpunished."[2]

Such was the horrible tale which was circulated and believed in by Henry the Great of France and by eminent nobles and ambassadors, and at least thought possible by the English envoy. By such a family arrangement it was obvious that the conflicting claims of father and daughter to the proprietorship of France would be ingeniously adjusted, and the children of so well assorted a marriage might reign in undisputed legitimacy over France and Spain, and the rest of the world-monarchy. Should the king decide on the whole against this matrimonial project, should Innocent or Clement prove as intractable as Sixtus, then it would be necessary to decide among various candidates for the Infanta's hand.

[2] Stafford to Burghley, 14 Oct. 1590. (S. P. Office MS.)

In Mayenne's opinion the Duke of Guise was likely to be the man; but there is little doubt that Philip, in case these more cherished schemes should fail, had made up his mind—so far as he ever did make up his mind upon anything—to select his nephew the Archduke Ernest, brother of the Emperor Rudolph, for his son-in-law. But it was not necessary to make an immediate choice. His quiver was full of archdukes, any one of whom would be an eligible candidate, while not one of them would be likely to reject the Infanta with France on her wedding-finger. Meantime there was a lion in the path in the shape of Henry of Navarre.

Those who disbelieve in the influence of the individual on the fate of mankind may ponder the possible results to history and humanity, had the dagger of Jacques Clément entered the stomach of Henry IV. rather than of Henry III. in the summer of 1589, or the perturbations in the world's movements that might have puzzled philosophers had there been an unsuspected mass of religious conviction revolving unseen in the mental depths of the Béarnese. Conscience, as it has from time to time exhibited itself on this planet of ours, is a powerful agent in controlling political combinations; but the instances are unfortunately not rare, so far as sublunary progress is concerned, in which the absence of this dominant influence permits a prosperous rapidity to individual careers. Eternal honour to the noble beings, true chieftains among men, who have forfeited worldly power or sacrificed life itself at the dictate of religious or moral conviction—even should the basis of such conviction appear to some of us unsafe or unreal. Shame on the tongue which would malign or ridicule the martyr or the honest convert to any form of Christian faith! But who can discover aught that is inspiring to the sons of men in conversions—whether of princes or of peasants—wrought, not at risk of life and pelf, but for the sake of securing and increasing the one and the other?

Certainly the Béarnese was the most candid of men. It was this very candour, this freedom from bigotry, this want

of conviction, and this openness to conviction, that made him so dangerous and caused so much anxiety to Philip. The Roman Church might or might not be strengthened by the re-conversion of the legitimate heir of France, but it was certain that the claims of Philip and the Infanta to the proprietorship of that kingdom would be weakened by the process. While the Spanish king knew himself to be inspired in all his actions by a single motive, the maintenance of the supremacy of the Roman Church, he was perfectly aware that the Prince of Béarne was not so single-hearted nor so conscientious as himself.

The Prince of Béarne—heretic, son of heretics, great chieftain of heretics—was supposed capable of becoming orthodox whenever the Pope would accept his conversion. Against this possibility Philip struggled with all his strength.

Since Pope Sixtus V., who had a weakness for Henry, there had been several popes. Urban VII., his immediate successor, had reigned but thirteen days. Gregory XIV. (Sfondrato) had died 15th October, 1591, ten months after his election. Fachinetti, with the title of Innocent IX., had reigned two months, from 29th October to 29th December, 1591. He died of "Spanish poison," said Envoy Umton, as coolly as if speaking of gout, or typhus, or any other recognised disorder. Clement VIII. (Aldobrandini) was elected 30th January, 1592. He was no lover of Henry, and lived in mortal fear of Philip, while it must be conceded that the Spanish ambassador at Rome was much given to brow-beating his Holiness. Should he dare to grant that absolution which was the secret object of the Béarnese, there was no vengeance, hinted the envoy, that Philip would not wreak on the holy father. He would cut off his supplies from Naples and Sicily, and starve him and all his subjects; he would frustrate all his family schemes, he would renounce him, he would unpope him, he would do anything that man and despot could do, should the great shepherd dare to re-admit this lost sheep, and this very black sheep, into the fold of the faithful.

As for Henry himself, his game—for in his eyes it was nothing but a game—lay every day plainer and plainer before him. He was indispensable to the heretics. Neither England, nor Holland, nor Protestant Germany, could renounce him, even should he renounce "the religion." Nor could the French Huguenots exist without that protection which, even although Catholic, he could still extend to them when he should be accepted as king by the Catholics.

Hereditary monarch by French law and history, released from his heresy by the authority that could bind and loose, purged as with hyssop and washed whiter than snow, it should go hard with him if Philip, and Farnese, and Mayenne, and all the pikemen and reiters they might muster, could keep him very long from the throne of his ancestors.

Nothing could match the ingenuousness with which he demanded the instruction whenever the fitting time for it should arrive; as if, instead of having been a professor both of the Calvinist and Catholic persuasion, and having relapsed from both, he had been some innocent Peruvian or Hindoo, who was invited to listen to preachings and to examine dogmas for the very first time in his life.

Yet Philip had good grounds for hoping a favourable result from his political and military manœuvre. He entertained little doubt that France belonged to him or to his daughter; that the most powerful party in the country was in favour of his claims, provided he would pay the voters liberally enough for their support, and that if the worst came to the worst it would always be in his power to dismember the kingdom, and to reserve the lion's share for himself, while distributing some of the provinces to the most prominent of his confederates.

The sixteen tyrants of Paris had already, as we have seen, urged the crown upon him, provided he would establish in France the Inquisition, the council of Trent, and other acceptable institutions, besides distributing judiciously a good many lucrative offices among various classes of his adherents.

The Duke of Mayenne, in his own name and that of all the Catholics of France, formally demanded of him to maintain two armies, forty thousand men in all, to be respectively under command of the duke himself and of Alexander Farnese, and regularly to pay for them. These propositions, as has been seen, were carried into effect as nearly as possible, at enormous expense to Philip's exchequer, and he naturally expected as good faith on the part of Mayenne.

In the same paper in which the demand was made Philip was urged to declare himself king of France. He was assured that the measure could be accomplished "by freely bestowing marquisates, baronies, and peerages, in order to content the avarice and ambition of many persons, without at the same time dissipating the greatness from which all these members depended. Pepin and Charlemagne," said the memorialists, "who were foreigners and Saxons by nation, did as much in order to get possession of a kingdom to which they had no other right except that which they acquired there by their prudence and force, and after them Hugh Capet, much inferior to them in force and authority, following their example, had the same good fortune for himself and his posterity, and one which still endures.

"If the authority of the holy see could support the scheme at the same time," continued Mayenne and friends, "it would be a great help. But it being perilous to ask for that assistance before striking the blow, it would be better to obtain it after the execution."[3]

That these wholesome opinions were not entirely original on the part of Mayenne, nor produced spontaneously, was plain from the secret instructions given by Philip to his envoys, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, John Baptist de Tassis, and the commander Moreo, whom he had sent soon after the death of Henry III. to confer with Cardinal Gaetano in Paris.

They were told, of course, to do everything in their power to prevent the election of the Prince of Béarne, "being as

[3] Arch. de Simancas (Paris), A 57, $\frac{133}{}$. MS.

he was a heretic, obstinate and confirmed, who had sucked heresy with his mother's milk." The legate was warned that "if the Béarnese should make a show of converting himself, it would be frigid and fabricated."[4]

If they were asked whom Philip desired for king—a question which certainly seemed probable under the circumstances—they were to reply that his foremost wish was to establish the Catholic religion in the kingdom, and that whatever was most conducive to that end would be most agreeable to him. "As it is however desirable, in order to arrange matters, that you should be informed of everything," said his Majesty, "it is proper that you should know that I have two kinds of right to all that there is over there. Firstly, because the crown of France has been usurped from me, my ancestors having been unjustly excluded by foreign occupation of it; and secondly, because I claim the same crown as first male of the house of Valois."[5]

Here certainly were comprehensive pretensions, and it was obvious that the king's desire for the establishment of the Catholic religion must have been very lively to enable him to invent or accept such astonishing fictions.

But his own claims were but a portion of the case. His daughter and possible spouse had rights of her own, hard, in his opinion, to be gainsaid. "Over and above all this," said Philip, "my eldest daughter, the Infanta, has two other rights; one to all the states which as dower-property are joined by matrimony and through females to this crown, which now come to her in direct line, and the other to the crown itself, which belongs directly to the said Infanta, the matter of the Salic law being a mere invention."[6]

Thus it would appear that Philip was the legitimate representative, not only of the ancient races of French

[4] Instruccion que se dió á Don B. de Mendoza, J. B. de Tassis, y el Com. Moreo. anno 1589. (Arch. de Simancas MS.

[5] "Es buen que sepays que yo tengo dos maneras de derecho a lo de ay; por una parte a lo que me tiene usurpado essa corona aviendo lo ocupado injustamente a mios pasados, y por otra a la misma corona como Varon mayor de dias de la casa Valesia—y que de mas desto tiene otros dos derechos la Infanta mi hija mayor," &c.

[6] Ibid.

monarchs—whether Merovingians, Carlovingians, or otherwise was not stated—but also of the usurping houses themselves, by whose intrusion those earlier dynasties had been ejected, being the eldest male heir of the extinct line of Valois, while his daughter was, if possible, even more legitimately the sovereign and proprietor of France than he was himself.

Nevertheless in his magnanimous desire for the peace of the world and the advancement of the interests of the Church, he was, if reduced to extremities, willing to forego his own individual rights—when it should appear that they could by no possibility be enforced—in favour of his daughter and of the husband whom he should select for her.

"Thus it may be seen," said the self-denying man, "that I know how, for the sake of the public repose, to strip myself of my private property." [7]

Afterwards, when secretly instructing the Duke of Feria, about to proceed to Paris for the sake of settling the sovereignty of the kingdom, he reviewed the whole subject, setting forth substantially the same intentions. That the Prince of Béarne could ever possibly succeed to the throne of his ancestors was an idea to be treated only with sublime scorn by all right-minded and sensible men. "The members of the House of Bourbon," said he, "pretend that by right of blood the crown belongs to them, and hence is derived the pretension made by the Prince of Béarne; but if there were wanting other very sufficient causes to prevent this claim—which however are not wanting—it is quite enough that he is a relapsed heretic, declared to be such by the Apostolic See, and pronounced incompetent, as well as the other members of his house, all of them, to say the least, encouragers of heresy; so that not one of them can ever be king of France, where there have been such religious princes in time past,

[7] "Tras esto, como vo tiro el suave reparo desse reyno mas que a interesses proprios facilmente me absterria de las pretenciones que me tocan, con saber que son muy bien fundadas si viesse abrirse puerta a que consiguiendo las suyas la Infanta y por via de casamiento que estuviesse bien a todos—que menos sombras y çelos causaria los invidiosos de fuera—assi para que se vea que sabe por el sossiego publico desnudarme de mi particular." (MS. last cited.)

who have justly merited the name of Most Christian ; and so there is no possibility of permitting him or any of his house to aspire to the throne, or to have the subject even treated of in the estates. It should on the contrary be entirely excluded as prejudicial to the realm and unworthy to be even mentioned among persons so Catholic as those about to meet in that assembly." [8]

The claims of the man whom his supporters already called Henry the Fourth of France being thus disposed of, Philip then again alluded with his usual minuteness to the various combinations which he had formed for the tranquillity and good government of that kingdom and of the other provinces of his world-empire.

It must moreover be never forgotten that what he said passed with his contemporaries almost for oracular dispensations. What he did or ordered to be done was like the achievements or behests of a superhuman being. Time, as it rolls by, leaves the wrecks of many a stranded reputation to bleach in the sunshine of after-ages. It is sometimes as profitable to learn what was *not* done by the great ones of the earth, in spite of all their efforts, as to ponder those actual deeds which are patent to mankind. The Past was once the Present, and once the Future, bright with rainbows or black with impending storm ; for history is a continuous whole of which we see only fragments.

He who at the epoch with which we are now occupied was deemed greatest and wisest among the sons of earth, at whose threats men quailed, at whose vast and intricate schemes men gasped in pale-faced awe, has left behind him the record of his interior being. Let us consider whether he was so potent as his fellow mortals believed, or whether his greatness was merely their littleness ; whether it was carved out of the inexhaustible but artificial quarry of human degradation. Let us see whether the execution was consonant with the inordinate plotting ; whether the price in money and blood—

[8] Instruccion general para el Duque de Feria, Madrid, 2 Enero, 1592, A. 57, $\frac{151}{---}$, MS.

and certainly few human beings have squandered so much of either as did Philip the Prudent in his long career—was high or low for the work achieved.

Were after generations to learn, only after curious research, of a pretender who once called himself, to the amusement of his contemporaries, Henry the Fourth of France; or was the world-empire for which so many armies were marshalled, so many ducats expended, so many falsehoods told, to prove a bubble after all? Time was to show. Meantime wise men of the day who, like the sages of every generation, read the future like a printed scroll, were pitying the delusion and rebuking the wickedness of Henry the Béarnese; persisting as he did in his cruel, sanguinary, hopeless attempt to establish a vanished and impossible authority over a land distracted by civil war.

Nothing could be calmer or more reasonable than the language of the great champion of the Inquisition.

"And as President Jeannin informs me," he said, "that the Catholics have the intention of electing me king, that appearing to them the gentlest and safest method to smooth all rivalries likely to arise among the princes aspiring to the crown, I reply, as you will see by the copy herewith sent. You will observe that after not refusing myself to that which may be the will of our Lord, should there be no other mode of serving Him, above all I desire that which concerns my daughter, since to her belongs the kingdom. I desire nothing else nor anything for myself, nor for anybody else, except as a means for her to arrive at her right." [9]

He had taken particular pains to secure his daughter's right in Brittany, while the Duchess of Mercœur, by the

[9] "Y por que dixo que avia voluntad en los Catolicos de nombrarme a mi por su rey, pareciendoles esto mas suave y seguro para allañar las competencias que puede aver entre los mismos principes que aspirau a estos, se le respondio lo que vereys per la copia que con esta se embia por donde entendereys que tras no negarme a lo que fuessa voluntad de n^o Señor quando no huviesse otro medio para su servicio, lo que sobre todo desseo es lo que toca a mi hija, pues a ella venga el reyno; yo no quiero otra cosa ni nada para mi ni para otro, sino es por torçedor y medio para que ella consiga su derecho." Instruccion General para el Duque de Feria, &c. (MS. before cited.)

secret orders of her husband, had sent a certain ecclesiastic to Spain to make over the sovereignty of this province to the Infanta. Philip directed that the utmost secrecy should be observed in regard to this transaction with the duke and duchess, and promised the duke, as his reward for these proposed services in dismembering his country, the government of the province for himself and his heirs.[10]

For the king was quite determined—in case his efforts to obtain the crown for himself or for his daughter were unsuccessful—to dismember France, with the assistance of those eminent Frenchmen who were now so industriously aiding him in his projects.

"And in the third place," said he, in his secret instructions to Feria, "if for the sins of all, we don't manage to make any election, and if therefore the kingdom (of France) has to come to separation and to be divided into many hands; in this case we must propose to the Duke of Mayenne to assist him in getting possession of Normandy for himself, and as to the rest of the kingdom, I shall take for myself that which seems good to me—all of us assisting each other." [11]

But unfortunately it was difficult for any of these fellow-labourers to assist each other very thoroughly, while they detested each other so cordially and suspected each other with such good reason.

Moreo, Ybarra, Feria, Parma, all assured their master that Mayenne was taking Spanish money as fast as he could get it, but with the sole purpose of making himself king. As to any of the House of Lorraine obtaining the hand of the Infanta and the throne with it, Feria assured Philip

[10] Instruccion secreta para Don Mendo de la Desma, 2 March, 1591. (Arch. de Simancas, A 57, $\frac{134}{}$, MS.)

[11] "El tercero si por pecados de todos no se acertasse a hazer election ninguna, y assi huviesse de venir a quel reyno en disipacion, y dividirse en muchos manos, y en este caso se ofrecio al Duque de Umena de asistirle para que se apodere de Normandia para si, y que de lo demas tome yo para mi lo que me pareciere, ayudando nos bien uno a otro."

Instruccion secreta lo que vos Don Lorenzo Suarez de Figueroa, Duque de Feria, mi primo aveys de llevar entendido de mas que contiene la instruccion general que llevays. 2 Enero, 1592. Arch. de Simancas (Paris) MS. A. 57, $\frac{151}{}$.

that Mayenne "would sooner give the crown to the Grand Turk." [12]

Nevertheless Philip thought it necessary to continue making use of the duke. Both were indefatigable therefore in expressing feelings of boundless confidence each in the other.

It has been seen too how entirely the king relied on the genius and devotion of Alexander Farnese to carry out his great schemes; and certainly never had monarch a more faithful, unscrupulous, and dexterous servant. Remonstrating, advising, but still obeying—entirely without conscience, unless it were conscience to carry out his master's commands, even when most puerile or most diabolical—he was nevertheless the object of Philip's constant suspicion, and felt himself placed under perpetual though secret supervision.

Commander Moreo was unwearied in blackening the duke's character, and in maligning his every motive and action, and greedily did the king incline his ear to the calumnies steadily instilled by the chivalrous spy.

"He has caused all the evil we are suffering," said Moreo. "When he sent Egmont to France 'twas without infantry, although Egmont begged hard for it, as did likewise the Legate, Don Bernardino, and Tassis. Had he done this there is no doubt at all that the Catholic cause in France would have been safe, and your Majesty would now have the control over that kingdom which you desire. This is the opinion of friends and foes. I went to the Duke of Parma and made free to tell him that the whole world would blame him for the damage done to Christianity, since your Majesty had exonerated yourself by ordering him to go to the assistance of the French Catholics with all the zeal possible. Upon this he was so disgusted that he has never shown me a civil face since. I doubt whether he will send or go to France at all, and although the Duke of Mayenne despatches couriers every day with protestations and words that would soften rocks, I see no indications of a movement." [13]

[12] Duke of Feria to Philip. Arch. de Simancas (Paris), B. 75, 26 to 30, cited by Capefigue, vi. 259.

[13] Moreo to Philip, 22 June, 1590. Arch. de Simancas MS.

Thus, while the duke was making great military preparations for invading France without means; pawning his own property to get bread for his starving veterans, and hanging those veterans whom starving had made mutinous, he was depicted, to the most suspicious and unforgiving mortal that ever wore a crown, as a traitor and a rebel, and this while he was renouncing his own judicious and well-considered policy in obedience to the wild schemes of his master.

"I must make bold to remind your Majesty," again whispered the spy, "that there never was an Italian prince who failed to pursue his own ends, and that there are few in the world that are not wishing to become greater than they are. This man here could strike a greater blow than all the rest of them put together. Remember that there is not a villain anywhere that does not desire the death of your Majesty. Believe me, and send to cut off my head if it shall be found that I am speaking from passion, or from other motive than pure zeal for your royal service." [14]

The reader will remember into what a paroxysm of rage Alexander was thrown on a former occasion, when secretly invited to listen to propositions by which the sovereignty over the Netherlands was to be secured to himself, and how near he was to inflicting mortal punishment with his own hand on the man who had ventured to broach that treasonable matter.[15]

Such projects and propositions were ever floating, as it were, in the atmosphere, and it was impossible for the most just men to escape suspicion in the mind of a king who fed upon suspicion as his daily bread. Yet nothing could be fouler or falser than the calumny which described Alexander as unfaithful to Philip. Had he served his God as he served

[14] Moreo to Philip, 22 June, 1590. "Me atrevere a decir que se acuerde V. M. que no hay principe in Italia qui deje de tener sus fines, y que hay pocos en el mundo qui no tengan puesta la mira a ser mas—y el de aquí podria si quiere dar mayor golpe que todos los demas—y que no hay hombre malo qui no dessee la muerte de V. Md. Crealo y mandame cortar la cabeza si hallare que digo por pasion ni otro que çelo limpio del servicio de V. Md."

[15] See Vol. II. of this work, p. 539.

his master perhaps his record before the highest tribunal would have been a clearer one.

And in the same vein in which he wrote to the monarch in person did the crafty Moreo write to the principal secretary of state, Idiaquez, whose mind, as well as his master's, it was useful to poison, and who was in daily communication with Philip.

"Let us make sure of Flanders," said he, "otherwise we shall all of us be well cheated. I will tell you something of that which I have already told his Majesty, only not all, referring you to Tassis, who, as a personal witness to many things, will have it in his power to undeceive his Majesty. I have seen very clearly that the duke is disgusted with his Majesty, and one day he told me that he cared not if the whole world went to destruction, only not Flanders.[16]

"Another day he told me that there was a report abroad that his Majesty was sending to arrest him, by means of the Duke of Pastrana, and looking at me he said: 'See here, seignior commander, no threats, as if it were in the power of mortal man to arrest me, much less of such fellows as these.'[17]

"But this is but a small part of what I could say," continued the detective knight-commander, "for I don't like to trust these ciphers. But be certain that nobody in Flanders wishes well to these estates or to the Catholic cause, and the associates of the Duke of Parma go about saying that it does not suit the Italian potentates to have his Majesty as great a monarch as he is trying to be."[18]

This is but a sample of the dangerous stuff with which the royal mind was steadily drugged, day after day, by those to whom Farnese was especially enjoined to give his confidence. Later on it will be seen how much effect was thus produced both upon the king and upon the duke. Moreo, Mendoza, and Tassis were placed about the governor-general, nominally as his counsellors, in reality as police-officers.

[16] Moreo to Don I. de Idiaquez, 30 Jan. 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[17] Ibid. "Y viendome dixo, mire Señor Com^dor que calle de amenazas, como si fuese en poder de hombre humano que me pudiese prender, quanto mas semejante gente," &c.

[18] Ibid.

"You are to confer regularly with Mendoza, Tassis, and Moreo," said Philip to Farnese.[19]

"You are to assist, correspond, and harmonize in every way with the Duke of Parma," wrote Philip to Mendoza, Tassis, and Moreo.[20] And thus cordially and harmoniously were the trio assisting and corresponding with the duke.

But Moreo was right in not wishing to trust the ciphers, and indeed he had trusted them too much, for Farnese was very well aware of his intrigues, and complained bitterly of them to the king and to Idiaquez.

Most eloquently and indignantly did he complain of the calumnies, ever renewing themselves, of which he was the subject. "'Tis this good Moreo who is the author of the last falsehoods," said he to the secretary; "and this is but poor payment for my having neglected my family, my parents and children for so many years in the king's service, and put my life ever on the hazard, that these fellows should be allowed to revile me and make game of me now, instead of assisting me."[21]

He was at that time, after almost superhuman exertions, engaged in the famous relief of Paris. He had gone there, he said, against his judgment and remonstrating with his Majesty on the insufficiency of men and money for such an enterprise. His army was half-mutinous and unprovided with food, artillery, or munitions; and then he found himself slandered, ridiculed, his life's life lied away. 'Twas poor payment for his services, he exclaimed, if his Majesty should give ear to these calumniators, and should give him no chance of confronting his accusers and clearing his reputation. Moreo detested him, as he knew, and Prince Doria said that the commander once spoke so ill of Farnese in Genoa that he was on the point of beating him; while Moreo afterwards told the story as if he had been maltreated because of defending Farnese against Doria's slanders.[22]

[19] Philip to Parma, 30 Jan. 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[20] Instruccion que S. M. dio a J. B. Tassis, para Don B. de Mendoza and Com^dador Moreo, May 3, 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[21] Parma to Idiaquez, 20 Oct. 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[22] Parma to Philip; same date. Ibid.

And still more vehemently did he inveigh against Moreo in his direct appeals to Philip.[23] He had intended to pass over his calumnies, of which he was well aware, because he did not care to trouble the dead—for Moreo meantime had suddenly died, and the gossips, of course, said it was of Farnese poison[24]—but he had just discovered by documents that the commander had been steadily and constantly pouring these his calumnies into the monarch's ears. He denounced every charge as lies, and demanded proof. Moreo had further been endeavouring to prejudice the Duke of Mayenne against the King of Spain and himself, saying that he, Farnese, had been commissioned to take Mayenne into custody, with plenty of similar lies.

"But what I most feel," said Alexander, with honest wrath, "is to see that your Majesty gives ear to them without making the demonstration which my services merit, and has not sent to inform me of them, seeing that they may involve my reputation and honour. People have made more account of these calumnies than of my actions performed upon the theatre of the world. I complain, after all my toils and dangers in your Majesty's service, just when I stood with my soul in my mouth and death in my teeth, forgetting children, house, and friends, to be treated thus, instead of receiving rewards and honour, and being enabled to leave to my children, what was better than all the riches the royal hand could bestow, an unsullied and honourable name."[25]

He protested that his reputation had so much suffered that he would prefer to retire to some remote corner as a humble

[23] Parma to Philip, 20 Oct. 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[24] "Murio en Miaux a los treynta de Agosto (1590) el Comendador Juan Moreo," says Coloma (iii. 47, 48), "hombre de ingenio prompto y artificioso, que de moderados principios de un pobre Caballero de Malta, llego á ser primer Mobil de las furiosas guerras que abrasaron tantos años a Francia, excessivo gastador de la hazienda del rey, y *atrevidissimo comprador* de voluntades; este gano la del Duque de Guisa de manera que le hizo Español de corazon, y le confirmó en el aborrecimiento contra los herejes, y sus fautores sin excepcion de persona, tan a la descubierta que le costo la vida: á el se dixo que le costó la suya lo que escrivio al rey contra el Duque de Parma; murio casi al improviso despues de cierto banquete, que ocasionó esta fama, y en que le traço no menos infamia que acrecentamiento."

[25] Ibid.

servant of the king, and leave a post which had made him so odious to all. Above all, he entreated his Majesty to look upon this whole affair "not only like a king but like a gentleman."[26]

Philip answered these complaints and reproaches benignantly, expressed unbounded confidence in the duke, assured him that the calumnies of his supposed enemies could produce no effect upon the royal mind, and coolly professed to have entirely forgotten having received any such letter as that of which his nephew complained. "At any rate I have mislaid it," he said, "so that you see how much account it was with me."[27]

As the king was in the habit of receiving such letters every week, not only from the commander, since deceased, but from Ybarra and others, his memory, to say the least, seemed to have grown remarkably feeble. But the sequel will very soon show that he had kept the letters by him and pondered them to much purpose. To expect frankness and sincerity from him, however, even in his most intimate communications to his most trusted servants, would have been to "swim with fins of lead."

Such being the private relations between the conspirators, it is instructive to observe how they dealt with each other in the great game they were playing for the first throne in Christendom. The military events have been sufficiently sketched in the preceding pages, but the meaning and motives of public affairs can be best understood by occasional glances behind the scenes. It is well for those who would maintain their faith in popular Governments to study the workings of the secret, irresponsible, arbitrary system; for every Government, as every individual, must be judged at last by those moral laws which no man born of woman can evade.

During the first French expedition—in the course of which

[26] Parma to Philip, 20 Oct. 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) "Sea servido V. Md considerar no tan solamente con ojos de rey mas de cavallero esto negocio."

[27] Philip to Parma, 5 Dec. 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

Farnese had saved Paris from falling into the hands of Henry, and had been doing his best to convert it prospectively into the capital of his master's empire—it was his duty, of course, to represent as accurately as possible the true state of France. He submitted his actions to his master's will, but he never withheld from him the advantage that he might have derived, had he so chosen, from his nephew's luminous intelligence and patient observation.

With the chief personage he had to deal with he professed himself, at first, well satisfied. "The Duke of Mayenne," said he to Philip, "persists in desiring your Majesty only as King of France, and will hear of no other candidate, which gives me satisfaction such as can't be exaggerated."[28] Although there were difficulties in the way, Farnese thought that the two together with God's help might conquer them. "Certainly it is not impossible that your Majesty may succeed," he said, "although very problematical; and in case your Majesty does succeed in that which we all desire and are struggling for, Mayenne not only demands the second place in the kingdom for himself, but the fief of some great province for his family."[29]

Should it not be possible for Philip to obtain the crown, Farnese was, on the whole, of opinion that Mayenne had better be elected. In that event he would make over Brittany and Burgundy to Philip, together with the cities opposite the English coast. If they were obliged to make the duke king, as was to be feared, they should at any rate exclude the Prince of Béarne, and secure, what was the chief point, the Catholic religion. "This," said Alexander, "is about what I can gather of Mayenne's views, and perhaps he will put them down in a despatch to your Majesty."[30]

After all, the duke was explicit enough. He was for taking all he could get—the whole kingdom if possible—but if foiled, then as large a slice of it as Philip would give him as the

[28] Parma to Philip, 21 Oct. 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) "Que es persistir el D. de Umena en no pretender otro rey que V. Md en este reyno lo cual nos viene tan a cuento que no hay para que encarescello."

[29] Same letter.

[30] Ibid.

price of his services. And Philip's ideas were not materially different from those of the other conspirator.

Both were agreed on one thing. The true heir must be kept out of his rights, and the Catholic religion be maintained in its purity. As to the inclination of the majority of the inhabitants, they could hardly be in the dark. They knew that the Béarnese was instinctively demanded by the nation; for his accession to the throne would furnish the only possible solution to the entanglements which had so long existed.[31]

As to the true sentiments of the other politicians and soldiers of the League with whom Farnese came in contact in France, he did not disguise from his master that they were anything but favourable.

"That you may know the humour of this kingdom," said he, "and the difficulties in which I am placed, I must tell you that I am by large experience much confirmed in that which I have always suspected. Men don't love nor esteem the royal name of your Majesty; and whatever the benefits and assistance they get from you they have no idea of anything redounding to your benefit and royal service, except so far as implied in maintaining the Catholic religion and keeping out the Béarne. These two things, however, they hold to be so entirely to your Majesty's profit, that all you are doing appears the fulfilment of a simple obligation. They are filled with fear, jealousy, and suspicion of your Majesty. They dread your acquiring power here. Whatever negotiations they pretend in regard to putting the kingdom or any of their cities under your protection, they have never had any real intention of doing it, but their only object is to keep up our vain hopes while they are carrying out their own ends. If to-day they seem to have agreed upon any measure, to-morrow they are sure to get out of it again. This has always been the case, and all your Majesty's ministers that have had dealings here would say so, if they chose to tell the truth. Men are disgusted with the entrance of the army, and if they

[31] Parma to Philip, Oct. 3, 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

were not expecting a more advantageous peace in the kingdom with my assistance than without it, I don't know what they would do ; for I have heard what I have heard and seen what I have seen. They are afraid of our army, but they want its assistance and our money." [32]

Certainly if Philip desired enlightenment as to the real condition of the country he had determined to appropriate, and the true sentiments of its most influential inhabitants, here was the man most competent of all the world to advise him, describing the situation for him, day by day, in the most faithful manner. And at every step the absolutely puerile inadequacy of the means employed by the king to accomplish his gigantic purposes became apparent. If the crime of subjugating or at least dismembering the great kingdom of France were to be attempted with any hope of success, at least it might have been expected that the man employed to consummate the deed would be furnished with more troops and money than would be required to appropriate a savage island in the Caribbean, or a German principality. But Philip expected miracles to be accomplished by the mere private assertion of his will. It was so easy to conquer realms at the writing table.

"I don't say," continued Farnese, "if I could have entered France with a competent army, well paid and disciplined, with plenty of artillery and munitions, and with funds enough to enable Mayenne to buy up the nobles of his party, and to conciliate the leaders generally with presents and promises, that perhaps they might not have softened. Perhaps interest and fear would have made that name agreeable which pleases them so little, now that the very reverse of all this has occurred. My want of means is causing a thousand disgusts among the natives of the country, and it is this penury that will be the chief cause of the disasters which may occur." [33]

Here was sufficiently plain speaking. To conquer a warlike nation without an army, to purchase a rapacious nobility

[32] Parma to Philip, Oct. 3, 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) [33] Ibid.

with an empty purse, were tasks which might break the stoutest heart. They were breaking Alexander's.

Yet Philip had funds enough, if he had possessed financial ability himself, or any talent for selecting good financiers. The richest countries of the old world and the new were under his sceptre ; the mines of Peru and Mexico, the wealth of farthest Ind, were at his disposition ; and moreover he drove a lucrative traffic in the sale of papal bulls and mass-books, which were furnished to him at a very low figure, and which he compelled the wild Indians of America and the savages of the Pacific to purchase of him at an enormous advance. That very year, a Spanish carrack had been captured by the English off the Barbary coast, with an assorted cargo, the miscellaneous nature of which gives an idea of royal commercial pursuits at that period. Besides wine in large quantities there were fourteen hundred chests of quicksilver, an article indispensable to the working of the silver mines, and which no one but the king could, upon pain of death, send to America. He received, according to contract, for every pound of quicksilver thus delivered a pound of pure silver, weight for weight. The ship likewise contained ten cases of gilded mass-books and papal bulls. The bulls, two million and seventy thousand in number, for the dead and the living, were intended for the provinces of New Spain, Yucatan, Guatemala, Honduras, and the Philippines. The quicksilver and the bulls cost the king three hundred thousand florins, but he sold them for five million. The price at which the bulls were to be sold varied—according to the letters of advice found in the ships—from two to four reals a piece, and the inhabitants of those conquered regions were obliged to buy them.[34] "From all this," says a contemporary chronicler, "is to be seen what a thrifty trader was the king." [35]

The affairs of France were in such confusion that it was impossible for them, according to Farnese, to remain in such condition much longer without bringing about entire decom-

[34] Meteren, xvi. 300. [35] Ibid

position. Every man was doing as he chose — whether governor of a city, commander of a district, or gentleman in his castle. Many important nobles and prelates followed the Béarnese party, and Mayenne was entitled to credit for doing as well as he did. There was no pretence, however, that his creditable conduct was due to anything but the hope of being well paid. "If your Majesty should decide to keep Mayenne," said Alexander, "you can only do it with large sums of money. He is a good Catholic and very firm in his purpose, but is so much opposed by his own party, that if I had not so stimulated him by hopes of his own grandeur, he would have grown desperate—such small means has he of maintaining his party—and, it is to be feared, he would have made arrangements with Béarne, who offers him carte-blanche." [36]

The disinterested man had expressed his assent to the views of Philip in regard to the assembly of the estates and the election of king, but had claimed the sum of six hundred thousand dollars as absolutely necessary to the support of himself and followers until those events should occur.[37] Alexander not having that sum at his disposal was inclined to defer matters, but was more and more confirmed in his opinion that the Duke was a "man of truth, faith, and his word." [38] He had distinctly agreed that no king should be elected, not satisfactory to Philip, and had "stipulated in return that he should have in this case, not only the second place in the kingdom, but some very great and special reward in full property." [39]

Thus the man of truth, faith, and his word had no idea of selling himself cheap, but manifested as much commercial genius as the Fuggers themselves could have displayed, had they been employed as brokers in these mercantile transactions.

Above all things, Alexander implored the king to be expeditious, resolute, and liberal; for, after all, the Béarnese might prove a more formidable competitor than he was

[36] Parma to Philip, Oct. 3, 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)
[37] Ibid.
[38] "Hombre de verdad, fé y palabra." (Ibid.)
[39] Ibid.

deemed. "These matters must be arranged while the iron is hot," he said, "in order that the name and memory of the Béarne and of all his family may be excluded at once and for ever; for your Majesty must not doubt that the whole kingdom inclines to him, both because he is natural successor to the crown, and because in this way the civil war would cease. The only thing that gives trouble is the religious defect, so that if this should be remedied in appearance, even if falsely, men would spare no pains nor expense in his cause." [40]

No human being at that moment, assuredly, could look into the immediate future accurately enough to see whether the name and memory of the man, whom his adherents called Henry the Fourth of France, and whom Spaniards, legitimists and enthusiastic papists, called the Prince of Béarne, were to be for ever excluded from the archives of France; whether Henry, after spending the whole of his life as a pretender, was destined to bequeath the same empty part to his descendants, should they think it worth their while to play it. Meantime the sages smiled superior at his delusion; while Alexander Farnese, on the contrary, better understanding the chances of the great game which they were all playing, made bold to tell his master that all hearts in France were inclining to their natural lord. "Differing from your Majesty," said he, "I am of opinion that there is no better means of excluding him than to make choice of the Duke of Mayenne, as a person agreeable to the people, and who could only reign by your permission and support." [41]

Thus, after much hesitation and circumlocution, the nephew made up his mind to chill his uncle's hopes of the crown, and to speak a decided opinion in behalf of the man of his word, faith, and truth.

And thus through the whole of the two memorable campaigns made by Alexander in France, he never failed to give

[40] Parma to Philip, Oct. 3, 1590. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) "Que con esto quedara escluido totalmente el nombre y memoria de Béarne y de los de su casa a quien no dude V. Md de que el reyno todo inclina, asi por ser naturalemente sucesores del," &c.

[41] Ibid.

his master the most accurate pictures of the country, and an interior view of its politics; urging above all the absolute necessity of providing much more liberal supplies for the colossal adventure in which he was engaged. "Money and again money is what is required," he said. "The principal matter is to be accomplished with money, and the particular individuals must be bought with money. The good will of every French city must be bought with money. Mayenne must be humoured. He is getting dissatisfied. Very probably he is intriguing with Béarne. Everybody is pursuing his private ends. Mayenne has never abandoned his own wish to be king, although he sees the difficulties in the way; and while he has not the power to do us as much good as is thought, it is certainly in his hands to do us a great deal of injury." [42]

When his army was rapidly diminishing by disease, desertion, mutiny, and death, he vehemently and perpetually denounced the utter inadequacy of the king's means to his vast projects. He protested that he was not to blame for the ruin likely to come upon the whole enterprise. He had besought, remonstrated, reasoned with Philip—in vain.[43] He assured his master that in the condition of weakness in which they found themselves, not very triumphant negotiations could be expected, but that he would do his best. "The Frenchmen," he said, "are getting tired of our disorders, and scandalized by our weakness, misery, and poverty. They disbelieve the possibility of being liberated through us." [44]

He was also most diligent in setting before the king's eyes the dangerous condition of the obedient Netherlands, the poverty of the finances, the mutinous degeneration of the once magnificent Spanish army, the misery of the country, the ruin of the people, the discontent of the nobles, the rapid strides made by the republic, the vast improvement in its military organization, the rising fame of its young stadholder, the thrift of its exchequer, the rapid development

[42] Parma to Philip, 11 March, 1592. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)
[43] Ibid. [44] Same to same, 2 June, 1592. (Ibid.)

of its commerce, the menacing aspect which it assumed towards all that was left of Spanish power in those regions.

Moreover, in the midst of the toils and anxieties of war-making and negotiation, he had found time to discover and to send to his master the left leg of the glorious apostle St. Philip, and the head of the glorious martyr St. Lawrence, to enrich his collection of relics; and it may be doubted whether these treasures were not as welcome to the king as would have been the news of a decisive victory.[45]

During the absence of Farnese in his expeditions against the Béarnese, the government of his provinces was temporarily in the hands of Peter Ernest Mansfeld.

This grizzled old fighter—testy, choleric, superannuated—was utterly incompetent for his post. He was a mere tool in the hands of his son. Count Charles hated Parma very cordially, and old Count Peter was made to believe himself in danger of being poisoned or poniarded by the duke. He was perpetually wrangling with, importuning and insulting him in consequence, and writing malicious letters to the king in regard to him.[46] The great nobles, Arschot, Chimay, Berlaymont, Champagny, Arenberg, and the rest, were all bickering among themselves, and agreeing in nothing save in hatred to Farnese.

A tight rein, a full exchequer, a well-ordered and well-paid army, and his own constant patience, were necessary, as Alexander too well knew, to make head against the republic,

[45] Parma to Philip, 4 July, 1592. (Arch de Simancas MS.) Philip to. Parma, 1 Aug. 1592. Ibid. "Quanto a la cabeza del glorioso San Lorenzo agradezco os el cuydado que mostrais de haberla y os encargo que lo lleveis adelante hasta salir con ello que os tendré en mucho particular servicio que se haga por vuestro medio." Parma to Philip, 24 Aug. 1592. Ibid. Philip to Parma, 11 Sept. 1592. Letter to Parma. (Arch. de Simancas (Paris) MS. A 56, $\frac{33}{2}$. MS.)

[46] Parma to Philip, 31 July, 1592, (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Parma to Peter Ernest Mansfeld, 6 Aug. 1592. Mansfeld to Philip, 8 Aug. 1592. Parma to Mansfeld, 16 Aug. 1592. Parma to Philip, 24 Aug. 1592. "Porque con su larga vejez," said Fuentes of Peter Ernest, "se halla muy decrepito y desacordado que esto y ver quan sugeto está al hijo qui le govierna como a una criatura." Fuentes to Philip, 13 Dec. 1592. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Esteven de Yvarra to ——, 9 April, 1593—Ibid. Fuentes to Philip, 28 April, 1593—Ibid. Ybarra to ——, 2 May, 1593—Ibid. Same to Philip, 26th July, 1593—Ibid. Fuentes to the Secretaries of State, 2 Sept. 1593—Ibid.

and to hold what was left of the Netherlands. But with a monthly allowance, and a military force not equal to his own estimates for the Netherland work, he was ordered to go forth from the Netherlands to conquer France—and with it the dominion of the world—for the recluse of the Escorial.

Very soon it was his duty to lay bare to his master, still more unequivocally than ever, the real heart of Mayenne. No one could surpass Alexander in this skilful vivisection of political characters ; and he soon sent the information that the Duke was in reality very near closing his bargain with the Béarnese, while amusing Philip and drawing largely from his funds.

Thus, while faithfully doing his master's work with sword and pen, with an adroitness such as no other man could have matched, it was a necessary consequence that Philip should suspect, should detest, should resolve to sacrifice him. While assuring his nephew, as we have seen, that elaborate, slanderous reports and protocols concerning him, sent with such regularity by the chivalrous Moreo and the other spies, had been totally disregarded, even if they had ever met his eye, he was quietly preparing—in the midst of all these most strenuous efforts of Alexander, in the field at peril of his life, in the cabinet at the risk of his soul—to deprive him of his office, and to bring him, by stratagem if possible, but otherwise by main force, from the Netherlands to Spain.

This project, once resolved upon, the king proceeded to execute with that elaborate attention to detail, with that feline stealth which distinguished him above all kings or chiefs of police that have ever existed. Had there been a murder at the end of the plot, as perhaps there was to be—Philip could not have enjoyed himself more. Nothing surpassed the industry for mischief of this royal invalid.

The first thing to be done was of course the inditing of a most affectionate epistle to his nephew.

"Nephew," said he, "you know the confidence which I have always placed in you and all that I have put in your

hands; and I know how much you are to me, and how earnestly you work in my service, and so, if I could have you at the same time in several places, it would be a great relief to me. Since this cannot be however, I wish to make use of your assistance, according to the times and occasions, in order that I may have some certainty as to the manner in which all this business is to be managed, may see why the settlement of affairs in France is thus delayed, and what the state of things in Christendom generally is, and may consult with you about an army which I am getting levied here, and about certain schemes now on foot in regard to the remedy for all this; all which makes me desire your presence here for some time, even if a short time, in order to resolve upon and arrange, with the aid of your advice and opinion, many affairs concerning the public good and facilitate their execution by means of your encouragement and presence, and to obtain the repose which I hope for in putting them into your hands. And so I charge and command you that, if you desire to content me, you use all possible diligence to let me see you here as soon as possible, and that you start at once for Genoa."[47]

He was further directed to leave Count Mansfeld at the head of affairs during this temporary absence,—as had been the case so often before,—instructing him to make use of the Marquis of Cerralbo, who was already there, to lighten labours that might prove too much for a man of Mansfeld's advanced age.

"I am writing to the marquis," continued the king, "telling him that he is to obey all your orders. As to the reasons of your going away, you will give out that it is a decision of your own, founded on good cause, or that it is a summons of mine, but full of confidence and good will towards you, as you see that it is."[48]

The date of this letter was 20th February, 1592.

The secret instructions to the man who was thus to obey all the duke's orders were explicit enough upon that point,

[47] Philip to Parma, 20 Feb. 1592. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) [48] Ibid.

although they were wrapped in the usual closely-twisted phraseology which distinguished Philip's style when his purpose was most direct.

Cerralbo was entrusted with general directions as to the French matter, and as to peace negotiations with "the Islands;" but the main purport of his mission was to remove Alexander Farnese. This was to be done by fair means, if possible; if not, he was to be deposed and sent home by force.

This was to be the reward of all the toil and danger through which he had grown grey and broken in the king's service.

"When you get to the Netherlands" (for the instructions were older than the letter to Alexander just cited), "you are," said the king, "to treat of the other two matters until the exact time arrives for the third, taking good care not to cut the thread of good progress in the affairs of France if by chance they are going on well there.

"When the time arrives to treat of commission number three," continued his Majesty, "you will take occasion of the arrival of the courier of 20th February, and will give with much secrecy the letter of that date to the duke; showing him at the same time the first of the two which you will have received."

If the duke showed the letter addressed to him by his uncle—which the reader has already seen—then the marquis was to discuss with him the details of the journey, and comment upon the benefits and increased reputation which would be the result of his return to Spain.

"But if the duke should not show you the letter," proceeded Philip, "and you suspect that he means to conceal and equivocate about the particulars of it, you can show him your letter number two, in which it is stated that you have received a copy of the letter to the duke. This will make the step easier."

Should the duke declare himself ready to proceed to Spain on the ground indicated—that the king had need of his ser-

vices—the marquis was then to hasten his departure as earnestly as possible. Every pains were to be taken to overcome any objections that might be made by the duke on the score of ill health, while the great credit which attached to this summons to consult with the king in such arduous affairs was to be duly enlarged upon. Should Count Mansfeld meantime die of old age, and should Farnese insist the more vehemently, on that account, upon leaving his son the Prince Ranuccio in his post as governor, the marquis was authorised to accept the proposition for the moment—although secretly instructed that such an appointment was really quite out of the question—if by so doing the father could be torn from the place immediately.

But if all would not do, and if it should become certain that the duke would definitively refuse to take his departure, it would then become necessary to tell him clearly, but secretly, that no excuse would be accepted, but that go he must ; and that if he did not depart voluntarily within a fixed time, he would be publicly deprived of office and conducted to Spain by force.[49]

But all these things were to be managed with the secrecy and mystery so dear to the heart of Philip. The marquis was instructed to go first to the castle of Antwerp, as if upon financial business, and there begin his operations. Should he find at last all his private negotiations and coaxings of no avail, he was then to make use of his secret letters from the king to the army commanders, the leading nobles of the country, and of the neighbouring princes, all of whom were to be undeceived in regard to the duke, and to be informed of the will of his majesty.[50]

The real successor of Farnese was to be the Archduke Albert, Cardinal of Austria, son of Archduke Ferdinand, and the letters on this subject were to be sent by a "decent and confidential person" so soon as it should become obvious that force would be necessary in order to compel the

[49] Sumario de lo que S. Md es servido que haga V. en su comision principal como mas particularmente se le ha dicho de palabra. 31 Dec. 1591. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[50] Ibid.

departure of Alexander. For if it came to open rupture, it would be necessary to have the cardinal ready to take the place. If the affair were arranged amicably, then the new governor might proceed more at leisure. The marquis was especially enjoined, in case the duke should be in France, and even if it should be necessary for him to follow him there on account of commissions number one and two, not to say a word to him then of his recall, for fear of damaging matters in that kingdom. He was to do his best to induce him to return to Flanders, and when they were both there, he was to begin his operations.[51]

Thus, with minute and artistic treachery, did Philip provide for the disgrace and ruin of the man who was his near blood relation, and who had served him most faithfully from earliest youth. It was not possible to carry out the project immediately, for, as it has already been narrated, Farnese, after achieving, in spite of great obstacles due to the dulness of the king alone, an extraordinary triumph, had been dangerously wounded, and was unable for a brief interval to attend to public affairs.

On the conclusion of his Rouen campaign he had returned to the Netherlands, almost immediately betaking himself to the waters of Spa. The Marquis de Cerralbo meanwhile had been superseded in his important secret mission by the Count of Fuentes, who received the same instructions as had been provided for the marquis.

But ere long it seemed to become unnecessary to push matters to extremities. Farnese, although nominally the governor, felt himself unequal to take the field against the vigorous young commander who was carrying everything before him in the north and east. Upon the Mansfelds was the responsibility for saving Steenwyk and Coeworden, and to the Mansfelds did Verdugo send piteously, but in vain, for efficient help. For the Mansfelds and other leading personages in the obedient Netherlands were mainly occupied at

[51] MS. last cited. Also Philip to the Duke of Sessa, ambassador at Rome, 3 Nov. 1592, (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Philip to Parma, same date. (Ibid.)

that time in annoying Farnese, calumniating his actions, laying obstacles in the way of his administration, military and civil, and bringing him into contempt with the populace. When the weary soldier—broken in health, wounded and harassed with obtaining triumphs for his master such as no other living man could have gained with the means placed at his disposal —returned to drink the waters previously to setting forth anew upon the task of achieving the impossible, he was made the mark of petty insults on the part of both the Mansfelds. Neither of them paid their respects to him, ill as he was, until four days after his arrival. When the duke subsequently called a council, Count Peter refused to attend it on account of having slept ill the night before. Champagny, who was one of the chief mischief-makers, had been banished by Parma to his house in Burgundy. He became very much alarmed, and was afraid of losing his head. He tried to conciliate the duke, but finding it difficult he resolved to turn monk, and so went to the convent of Capuchins, and begged hard to be admitted a member. They refused him on account of his age and infirmities. He tried a Franciscan monastery with not much better success, and then obeyed orders and went to his Burgundy mansion, having been assured by Farnese that he was not to lose his head. Alexander was satisfied with that arrangement, feeling sure, he said, that so soon as his back was turned Champagny would come out of his convent before the term of probation had expired, and begin to make mischief again. A once valiant soldier, like Champagny, whose conduct in the famous "fury of Antwerp" was so memorable, and whose services both in field and cabinet had been so distinguished, fallen so low as to be used as a tool by the Mansfelds against a man like Farnese, and to be rejected as unfit company by Flemish friars, is not a cheerful spectacle to contemplate.

The walls of the Mansfeld house and gardens, too, were decorated by Count Charles with caricatures, intending to illustrate the indignities put upon his father and himself.

Among others, one picture represented Count Peter lying tied hand and foot, while people were throwing filth upon him; Count Charles being pourtrayed as meantime being kicked away from the command of a battery of cannon by De la Motte. It seemed strange that the Mansfelds should make themselves thus elaborately ridiculous, in order to irritate Farnese; but thus it was. There was so much stir about these works of art that Alexander transmitted copies of them to the king, whereupon Charles Mansfeld, being somewhat alarmed, endeavoured to prove that they had been entirely misunderstood. The venerable personage lying on the ground, he explained, was not his father, but Socrates. He found it difficult however to account for the appearance of La Motte, with his one arm wanting and with artillery by his side, because, as Farnese justly remarked, artillery had not been invented in the time of Socrates[52] nor was it recorded that the sage had lost an arm.

Thus passed the autumn of 1592, and Alexander, having as he supposed somewhat recruited his failing strength, prepared, according to his master's orders, for a new campaign in France. For with almost preterhuman malice Philip was employing the man whom he had doomed to disgrace, perhaps to death, and whom he kept under constant secret supervision, in those laborious efforts to conquer without an army and to purchase a kingdom with an empty purse, in which, as it was destined, the very last sands of Parma's life were to run away.

Suffering from a badly healed wound, from water on the chest, degeneration of the heart, and gout in the limbs, dropsical, enfeebled, broken down into an old man before his time, Alexander still confronted disease and death with as heroic a front as he had ever manifested in the field to embattled Hollanders and Englishmen, or to the still more formidable array of learned pedants and diplomatists in the hall of negotiation. This wreck of a man was still fitter to

[52] Parma to Philip, 28 Oct. 1592. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

lead armies and guide councils than any soldier or statesman that Philip could call into his service, yet the king's cruel hand was ready to stab the dying man in the dark.

Nothing could surpass the spirit with which the soldier was ready to do battle with his best friend, coming in the guise of an enemy. To the last moment, lifted into the saddle, he attended personally as usual to the details of his new campaign, and was dead before he would confess himself mortal.[53] On the 3rd of December, 1592, in the city of Arras, he fainted after retiring at his usual hour to bed, and thus breathed his last.

According to the instructions in his last will, he was laid out barefoot in the robe and cowl of a Capuchin monk. Subsequently his remains were taken to Parma, and buried under the pavement of the little Franciscan church.[54] A pompous funeral, in which the Italians and Spaniards quarrelled and came to blows for precedence, was celebrated in Brussels, and a statue of the hero was erected in the capitol at Rome.

The first soldier and most unscrupulous diplomatist of his

[53] Bentivoglio, t. ii. lib. vi. p. 370. "E prima conosciuto si morto che volesse confesarsi mortale." Compare Coloma, v. 106. Meteren, xvi. 306. Bor, III. xxix. 661. Reyd, ix. 195. Dondini, iii. 639, *seqq.*

[54] Ibid. The inscription over his tomb was as follows:—

Alexander Farnesius,
Belgis Devictis
Et Francis obsidione levatis
Ut humili hoc loco
Ejus cadaver reponeretur
Mandavit iiii. Non Decemb.
An. MDXCII.
Dondini, iii. 642.

It appears by a letter of Marquis d'Havré to Philip that the death of Farnese took place on the 3rd December. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

So soon as his decease was known at Madrid, the first thought of Philip was to conceal from the pope that it had been his intention forcibly to recall him from the Netherlands. The Spanish ambassador at Rome was accordingly instructed to burn the papers which had been sent to him, and to suppress all the communications which he had been on the point of making to the pope.

"Don Cristoval and Don Juan are of opinion," said their minute laid before the king, "that since the notification sent to Rome was to remedy the damage that the report of the recall might cause at that court, now that all this has ceased with the death of the recalled, ... it is best to conceal that intention from the pope and from all others, and that it is sufficient for the Duke of Sessa to be informed of the truth," &c.

Philip noted on this memorandum with his own hand a decided approval of the suggestion, ordering it to be carried into effect, adding, "Let the Duke of Sessa be told to burn the letter and the copy that was sent with it," &c. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

age, he died when scarcely past his prime, a wearied, broken-hearted old man. His triumphs, military and civil, have been recorded in these pages, and his character has been elaborately pourtrayed. Were it possible to conceive of an Italian or Spaniard of illustrious birth in the sixteenth century, educated in the school of Machiavelli, at the feet of Philip, as anything but the supple slave of a master and the blind instrument of a Church, one might for a moment regret that so many gifts of genius and valour had been thrown away or at least lost to mankind. Could the light of truth ever pierce the atmosphere in which such men have their being; could the sad music of humanity ever penetrate to their ears; could visions of a world—on this earth or beyond it—not exclusively the property of kings and high-priests be revealed to them, one might lament that one so eminent among the sons of women had not been a great man. But it is a weakness to hanker for any possible connection between truth and Italian or Spanish statecraft of that day. The truth was not in it nor in him, and high above his heroic achievements, his fortitude, his sagacity, his chivalrous self-sacrifice, shines forth the baleful light of his perpetual falsehood.[55]

[55] I pass over, as beneath the level of history, a great variety of censorious and probably calumnious reports as to the private character of Farnese, with which the secret archives of the times are filled. Especially Champagny, the man by whom the duke was most hated and feared, made himself busy in compiling the slanderous chronicle in which the enemies of Farnese, both in Spain and the Netherlands, took so much delight. According to the secret history thus prepared for the enlightenment of the king and his ministers, the whole administration of the Netherlands—especially the financial department, with the distribution of offices—was in the hands of two favourites, a beardless secretary named Cosmo de Massi, and a lady of easy virtue called Franceline, who seems to have had a numerous host of relatives and friends to provide for at the public expense. Towards the latter end of the duke's life, it was even said that the seal of the finance department was in the hands of his valet-de-chambre, who, in his master's frequent absences, was in the habit of issuing drafts upon the receiver-general. As the valet-de-chambre was described as an idiot who did not know how to read, it may be believed that the finances fell into confusion. Certainly, if such statements were to be accepted, it would be natural enough that for every million dollars expended by the king in the provinces, not more than one hundred thousand were laid out for the public service; and this is the estimate made by Champagny, who, as a distinguished financier and once chief of the treasury in the provinces, might certainly be thought to know something of the subject. But Champagny was so beside himself with rage, hatred,

and terror, where Alexander was concerned, that he is as unfit a guide for those who wish the truth as Commander Moreo or Ybarra.

"Juan Baptista ayuda de camera, Italiano—para mas vilipendicia de finanzas el sello dellas, que solia guardar uno de los chefs, a estado en manos de Juan Baptista—se sellan sin el (Farnese) mas al alvidrio de Baptista idiota que no scave leer o de Rinaldi. . . . En suma es todo confusion y desorden y reduzir solo aprovecho destos y tales quanto se haze. . . . . Demas las mohatras de los usureros y mercaderes que con sus cambios y recambios pagas en paños y sedas y otras trampas, entendiendose con estos reforzando el dinero en diversos partes hay en que no viene a resultar al rey su milion quasi en cien mil escudos," &c. Discours du Seigneur de Champagny sur les affaires des Pays Bas, 21 Dec. 1589. Bibliothèque de Bourgogne, MS. No. 12,962.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Effect of the death of Farnese upon Philip's schemes — Priestly flattery and counsel — Assembly of the States-General of France — Meeting of the Leaguers at the Louvre — Conference at Suréne between the chiefs of the League and the "political" leaders — Henry convokes an assembly of bishops, theologians, and others — Strong feeling on all sides on the subject of the succession — Philip commands that the Infanta and the Duke of Guise be elected King and Queen of France — Manifesto of the Duke of Mayenne — Formal re-admission of Henry to the Roman faith — The pope refuses to consent to his reconciliation with the Church — His consecration with the sacred oil — Entry of the king into Paris — Departure of the Spanish garrison from the capital — Dissimulation of the Duke of Mayenne — He makes terms with Henry — Grief of Queen Elizabeth on receipt of the communications from France.

During the past quarter of a century there had been tragic scenes enough in France, but now the only man who could have conducted Philip's schemes to a tragic if not a successful issue was gone. Friendly death had been swifter than Philip, and had removed Alexander from the scene before his master had found fitting opportunity to inflict the disgrace on which he was resolved. Meantime, Charles Mansfeld made a feeble attempt to lead an army from the Netherlands into France, to support the sinking fortunes of the League; but it was not for that general of artillery to attempt the well-graced part of the all-accomplished Farnese with much hope of success. A considerable force of Spanish infantry, too, had been sent to Paris, where they had been received with much enthusiasm; a very violent and determined churchman, Sega, archbishop of Piacenza, and cardinal-legate, having arrived to check on the part of the holy father any attempt by the great wavering heretic to get himself readmitted into the fold of the faithful.[1]

The King of Spain considered it his duty, as well as his

[1] De Thou, xi. 675.

unquestionable right, to interfere in the affairs of France, and to save the cause of religion, civilization and humanity, in the manner so dear to the civilization-savers, by reducing that distracted country—utterly unable to govern itself—under his sceptre. To achieve this noble end no bribery was too wholesale, no violence too brutal, no intrigue too paltry. It was his sacred and special mission to save France from herself. If he should fail, he could at least carve her in pieces, and distribute her among himself and friends. Frenchmen might assist him in either of these arrangements, but it was absurd to doubt that on him devolved the work and the responsibility. Yet among his advisers were some who doubted whether the purchase of the grandees of France was really the most judicious course to pursue. There was a general and uneasy feeling that the grandees were making sport of the Spanish monarch, and that they would be inclined to remain his stipendiaries for an indefinite period, without doing their share of the work. A keen Jesuit, who had been much in France, often whispered to Philip that he was going astray. "Those who best understand the fit remedy for this unfortunate kingdom, and know the tastes and temper of the nation," said he, "doubt giving these vast presents and rewards in order that the nobles of France may affect your cause and further your schemes. It is the greatest delusion, because they love nothing but their own interest, and for this reason wish for no king at all, but prefer that the kingdom should remain topsy-turvy in order that they may enjoy the Spanish doubloons, as they say themselves almost publicly, dancing and feasting; that they may take a castle to-day, and to-morrow a city, and the day after a province, and so on indefinitely. What matters it to them that blood flows, and that the miserable people are destroyed, who alone are good for anything?"[2]

"The immediate cause of the ruin of France," continued

[2] Relacion del Padre Anto Crespo acerca de las cosas de Flandes y Francia (citing the conversations and statements of John de Zelander and Father Odo), 1593. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

the Jesuit, "comes from two roots which must be torn up; the one is the extreme ignorance and scandalous life of the ecclesiastics, the other is the tyranny and the abominable life of the nobility, who with sacrilege and insatiable avarice have entered upon the property of the Church. This nobility is divided into three factions. The first, and not the least, is heretic; the second and the most pernicious is politic or atheist; the *third and last* is catholic. All these, although they differ in opinion, are the same thing in corruption of life and manners, so that there is no choice among them." He then proceeded to set forth how entirely the salvation of France depended on the King of Spain. "Morally speaking," he said, "it is impossible for any Frenchman to apply the remedy. For this two things are wanting; intense zeal for the honour of God, and power. I ask now what Frenchman has both these, or either of them. No one certainly that we know. It is the King of Spain who alone in the world has the zeal and the power. No man who knows the insolence and arrogance of the French nature will believe that even if a king should be elected out of France he would be obeyed by the others. The first to oppose him would be Mayenne, even if a king were chosen from his family, unless everything should be given him that he asked, which would be impossible."

Thus did the wily priest instil into the ready ears of Philip additional reasons for believing himself the incarnate providence of God. When were priestly flatterers ever wanting to pour this poison into the souls of tyrants? It is in vain for us to ask why it is permitted that so much power for evil should be within the grasp of one wretched human creature, but it is at least always instructive to ponder the career of these crowned conspirators, and sometimes consoling to find its conclusion different from the goal intended. So the Jesuit advised the king not to be throwing away his money upon particular individuals, but with the funds which they were so unprofitably consuming to form a jolly army (*gallardo egercito*) of fifteen thousand foot, and five thousand horse, all

Spaniards, under a Spanish general—not a Frenchman being admitted into it—and then to march forward, occupy all the chief towns, putting Spanish garrisons into them, but sparing the people, who now considered the war eternal, and who were eaten up by both armies. In a short time the king might accomplish all he wished, for it was not in the power of the Béarnese to make considerable resistance for any length of time.[3]

This was the plan of Father Odo for putting Philip on the throne of France, and at the same time lifting up the down-trodden Church, whose priests, according to his statement, were so profligate, and whose tenets were rejected by all but a small minority of the governing classes of the country. Certainly it did not lack precision, but it remained to be seen whether the Béarnese was to prove so very insignificant an antagonist as the sanguine priest supposed.

For the third party—the moderate Catholics—had been making immense progress in France, while the diplomacy of Philip had thus far steadily counteracted their efforts at Rome. In vain had the Marquis Pisani, envoy of the politicians' party, endeavoured to soften the heart of Clement towards Henry. The pope lived in mortal fear of Spain, and the Duke of Sessa, Philip's ambassador to the holy see, denouncing all these attempts on the part of the heretic and his friends, and urging that it was much better for Rome that the pernicious kingdom of France should be dismembered and subdivided, assured his holiness that Rome should be starved, occupied, annihilated, if such abominable schemes should be for an instant favoured.

Clement took to his bed with sickness brought on by all this violence, but had nothing for it but to meet Pisani and other agents of the same cause with a peremptory denial, and send most stringent messages to his legate in Paris, who needed no prompting.[4]

There had already been much issuing of bulls by the pope,

[3] MS. last cited.

[4] De Thou, xii. 120.

and much burning of bulls by the hangman, according to decrees of the parliament of Chalons and other friendly tribunals, and burning of Chalons decrees by Paris hangmen, and edicts in favour of Protestants at Nantz and other places[5]—measures the enactment, repeal, and re-enactment of which were to mark the ebb and flow of the great tide of human opinion on the most important of subjects, and the traces of which were to be for a long time visible on the shores of time.

Early in 1593 Mayenne, yielding to the pressure of the Spanish party, reluctantly consented to assemble the States-General of France, in order that a king might be chosen.[6] The duke, who came to be thoroughly known to Alexander Farnese before the death of that subtle Italian, relied on his capacity to outwit all the other champions of the League and agents of Philip now that the master-spirit had been removed. As firmly opposed as ever to the election of any other candidate but himself, or possibly his son, according to a secret proposition which he had lately made to the pope,[7] he felt himself obliged to confront the army of Spanish diplomatists, Roman prelates, and learned doctors, by whom it was proposed to exclude the Prince of Béarne from his pretended rights. But he did not, after all, deceive them as thoroughly as he imagined. The Spaniards shrewdly suspected the French tactics, and the whole business was but a round game of deception, in which no one was much deceived, whoever might be destined ultimately to pocket the stakes. "I know from a very good source," said Fuentes, "that Mayenne, Guise, and the rest of them are struggling hard in order not to submit to Béarne, and will suffer everything

[5] De Thou, xi. 369, 370, *seqq.*

[6] Ibid. 665–670.

[7] "Entrando en platicas con el comisario del papa qui vino de Francia ha venido declararme en gran secreto que el Duca de Umena le dixo con el mismo no vendria en la election sino fuese en su hijo como lo escrivia al papa y a el pidio lo hiziesse y dixesse convenia para el bien de aquel reyno." Fuentes to Philip, 9 June, 1593. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

"Mostrome algo de lo que le escriven en esto y demas de lo que de Roma le avisa que el de Umena haze instancia para que la gente del papa se de a su hijo y que anda separada de la de V. Md." Same to same, 20 June, 1593. (Ibid.)

your Majesty may do to them, even if you kick them in the mouth, but still there is no conclusion on the road we are travelling, at least not the one which your Majesty desires. They will go on procrastinating and gaining time, making authority for themselves out of your Majesty's grandeur, until the condition of things comes which they are desiring. Feria tells me that they are still taking your Majesty's money, but I warn your Majesty that it is only to fight off Béarne, and that they are only pursuing their own ends at your Majesty's expense."[8]

Perhaps Mayenne had already a sufficiently clear insight into the not far-distant future, but he still presented himself in Spanish cloak and most ultramontane physiognomy. His pockets were indeed full of Spanish coin at that moment, for he had just claimed and received eighty-eight thousand nine hundred dollars for back debts, together with one hundred and eighty thousand dollars more to distribute among the deputies of the estates.[9] "All I can say about France," said Fuentes, "is that it is one great thirst for money. The Duke of Feria believes in a good result, but I think that Mayenne is only trying to pocket as much money as he can."[10]

Thus fortified, the Duke of Mayenne issued the address to the States-General of the kingdom, to meet at an early day in order to make arrangements to secure religion and peace, and to throw off the possible yoke of the heretic pretender. The great seal affixed to the document represented an empty throne, instead of the usual effigy of a king.[11]

The cardinal-legate issued a thundering manifesto at the

[8] Tambien he sabido de buen original que el D. de Umena, Guisa y los demas por no venir al partido con el de Bearne, aunque vicareen, sufriran todo lo que V. Md hiziere con ellos aunque les pise la boca, y que en quanto se fuere por el camino que agora, no habra, conclusion, a lo menos la que V. Md. dessea, y que iran dando muchas largas para dar tiempo al tiempo, authorizandose en tanto con la grandeza de V. Md. hasta llegar el estado que dessean." Fuentes to Philip, 9 June, 1593. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Same to same, 20 June, 1593. (Ibid.)

[9] Feria to Philip, 20 March, 1593. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[10] Lo que puedo dezir de Francia es todo sed de dinero—el de Umena como se espera sacarle quanto dinero pudiere, temo tan ruyn suceso como en todo," &c. Fuentes to ——, 22 May, 1593. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[11] De Thou, *ubi sup.*

same time sustaining Mayenne and virulently denouncing the Béarnese.[12]

The politicians' party now seized the opportunity to impress upon Henry that the decisive moment was come.

The Spaniard, the priest, and the League, had heated the furnace. The iron was at a white heat. Now was the time to strike. Secretary of State Rêvol, Gaspar de Schomberg, Jacques Auguste de Thou, the eminent historian, and other influential personages urged the king to give to the great question the only possible solution.

Said the king with much meekness, "If I am in error, let those who attack me with so much fury instruct me, and show me the way of salvation. I hate those who act against their conscience. I pardon all those who are inspired by truly religious motives, and I am ready to receive all into favour whom the love of peace, not the chagrin of ill-will, has disgusted with the war." [13]

There was a great meeting of Leaguers at the Louvre, to listen to Mayenne, the cardinal-legate, Cardinal Pellevé, the Duke of Guise, and other chieftains. The Duke of Feria made a long speech in Latin, setting forth the Spanish policy, veiled as usual, but already sufficiently well known, and assuring the assembly that the King of Spain desired nothing so much as the peace of France and of all the world, together with the supremacy of the Roman Church. Whether these objects could best be attained by the election of Philip or of his daughter, as sovereign, with the Archduke Ernest as king-consort, or with perhaps the Duke of Guise or some other eligible husband, were fair subjects for discussion. No selfish motive influenced the king, and he placed all his wealth and all his armies at the disposal of the League to carry out these great projects.[14]

Then there was a conference at Suréne between the chiefs of the League and the "political" leaders; the Archbishop of Lyons, the cardinal-legate, Villars, Admiral of France and defender of Rouen, Bêlin, Governor

27 April, 1593.

[12] De Thou, xi. 675. [13] Ibid. 683. [14] Ibid. 703–705.

of Paris, President Jeannin, and others upon one side; upon the other, the Archbishop of Bourges, Belliêvre, Schomberg, Rêvol, and De Thou.[15]

The Archbishop of Lyons said that their party would do nothing either to frustrate or to support the mission of Pisani, and that the pope would, as ever, do all that could be done to maintain the interests of the true religion.[16]

The Archbishop of Bourges, knowing well the meaning of such fine phrases, replied that he had much respect for the holy father, but that popes had now become the slaves and tools of the King of Spain, who, because he was powerful, held them subject to his caprice.[17]

At an adjourned meeting at the same place, the Archbishop of Lyons said that all questions had been asked and answered. All now depended on the pope, whom the League would always obey. If the pope would accept the reconciliation of the Prince of Béarne it was well. He hoped that his conversion would be sincere.[18]

10 May, 1593.

The political archbishop (of Bourges) replied to the League's archbishop, that there was no time for delays, and for journeys by land and sea to Rome. The least obstruction might prove fatal to both parties. Let the Leaguers now show that the serenity of their faces was but the mirror of their minds.

But the Leaguers' archbishop said that he could make no further advances. So ended the conference.[19]

The chiefs of the politicians now went to the king and informed him that the decisive moment had arrived.[20]

Henry had preserved his coolness throughout. Amid all the hubbub of learned doctors of law, archbishops—Leaguer and political—Sorbonne pedants, solemn grandees from Spain with Latin orations in their pockets, intriguing Guises, huckstering Mayennes, wrathful Huguenots, sanguinary cardinal-legates, threatening world-monarchs—heralded by Spanish musketeers, Italian lancers, and German reiters—

[15] De Thou, xi. 719–755. [16] Ibid. [17] Ibid. [18] Ibid. [19] Ibid. [20] Ibid. 748.

shrill screams of warning from the English queen, grim denunciations from Dutch Calvinists, scornful repulses from the holy father ; he kept his temper and his eye-sight, as perfectly as he had ever done through the smoke and din of the wildest battle-field. None knew better than he how to detect the weakness of the adversary, and to sound the charge upon his wavering line.

He blew the blast—sure that loyal Catholics and Protestants alike would now follow him pell-mell.

On the 16th May, 1593, he gave notice that he consented to get himself instructed, and that he summoned an assembly at Mantes on the 15th July, of bishops, theologians, princes, lords, and courts of parliament to hold council, and to advise him what was best to do for religion and the State.[21] 16 May, 1593.

Meantime he returned to the siege of Dreux, made an assault on the place, was repulsed, and then hung nine prisoners of war in full sight of the garrison as a punishment for their temerity in resisting him.[22] The place soon after capitulated (8th July, 1593).

The interval between the summons and the assembling of the clerical and lay notables at Mantes was employed by the Leaguers in frantic and contradictory efforts to retrieve a game which the most sagacious knew to be lost. But the politicians were equal to the occasion, and baffled them at every point.

The Leaguers' archbishop inveighed bitterly against the abominable edicts recently issued in favour of the Protestants.

The political archbishop (of Bourges) replied not by defending, but by warmly disapproving, those decrees of toleration, by excusing the king for having granted them for a temporary purpose, and by asserting positively that, so soon as the king should be converted, he would no longer countenance such measures.[23]

It is superfluous to observe that very different language

[21] De Thou, xi. 751. [22] Ibid. xii. 6. [23] Ibid. xi. 753.

was held on the part of Henry to the English and Dutch Protestants, and to the Huguenots of his own kingdom.

And there were many meetings of the Leaguers in Paris, many belligerent speeches by the cardinal legate, proclaiming war to the knife rather than that the name of Henry the heretic should ever be heard of again as candidate for the throne, various propositions spasmodically made in full assembly by Feria, Ybarra, Tassis, the jurisconsult Mendoza, and other Spanish agents in favour of the Infanta as queen of France, with Archduke Ernest or the Duke of Guise, or any other eligible prince, for her husband.

The League issued a formal and furious invective in answer to Henry's announcement; proving by copious citations from Jeremiah, St. Epiphany, St. Jerome, St. Cyprian, and St. Bernard, that it was easier for a leopard to change his spots or for a blackamoor to be washed white, than for a heretic to be converted, and that the king was thinking rather of the crown of France than of a heavenly crown, in his approaching conversion—an opinion which there were few to gainsay.[24]

And the Duke of Nemours wrote to his half-brother, the Duke of Mayenne, offering to use all his influence to bring about Mayenne's election as king on condition that if these efforts failed, Mayenne should do his best to procure the election of Nemours.[25]

And the Parliament of Paris formally and prospectively proclaimed any election of a foreigner null and void, and sent deputies to Mayenne urging him never to consent to the election of the Infanta.

What help, said they, can the League expect from the old and broken Philip, from a king who in thirty years has not been able, with all the resources of his kingdoms, to subdue the revolted provinces of the Netherlands? How can he hope to conquer France? Pay no further heed to the legate, they said, who is laughing in his sleeve at the miseries and distractions of our country.[26] So spake the deputies of the League-Parliament to the great captain of the League,

[24] De Thou, xi. 761. [25] Ibid. 779. [26] Ibid. 784

the Duke of Mayenne. It was obvious that the "great and holy confederacy" was becoming less confident of its invincibility. Madame League was suddenly grown decrepit in the eyes of her adorers.

Mayenne was angry at the action of the Parliament, and vehemently swore that he would annul their decree. Parliament met his threats with dignity, and resolved to stand by the decree, even if they all died in their places.[27]

At the same time the Duke of Feria suddenly produced in full assembly of Leaguers a written order from Philip that the Duke of Guise and the Infanta should at once be elected king and queen.[28] Taken by surprise, Mayenne dissembled his rage in masterly fashion, promised Feria to support the election, and at once began to higgle for conditions. He stipulated that he should have for himself the governments of Champagne, Burgundy, and La Brie, and that they should be hereditary in his family. He furthermore demanded that Guise should cede to him the principality of Joinville, and that they should pay him on the spot in hard money two hundred thousand crowns in gold, six hundred thousand more in different payments, together with an annual payment of fifty thousand crowns.[29]

It was obvious that the duke did not undervalue himself, but he had after all no intention of falling into the trap set for him. "He has made these promises (as above given) in writing," said the Duke of Savoy's envoy to his master, "but he will never keep them. The Duchess of Mayenne could not help telling me that her husband will never consent that the Duke of Guise should have the throne."[30] From this resolve he had never wavered, and was not likely to do so now. Accordingly the man "of his word, of faith, and truth," whom even the astute Farnese had at times half believed in, and who had received millions of Philip's money, now thought it time to break with Philip.

He issued a manifesto,[31] in which he observed that the

[27] De Thou, xi. 787. [28] Ibid xii. 8. [29] Ibid. 10.
[30] MS. de Mesmes, t. xi. 893, cited by Capefigue, vi. 268.
[31] De Thou, xii. 13–24.

States-General of France had desired that Philip should be elected King of France, and carry out his design of a universal monarchy, as the only means of ensuring the safety of the Catholic religion and the pacification of the world. It was feared, however, said Mayenne, that the king might come to the same misfortunes which befell his father, who, when it was supposed that he was inspired only by private ambition, and by the hope of placing a hereditary universal crown in his family, had excited the animosity of the princes of the empire. "If a mere suspicion had caused so great a misfortune in the empire," continued the man of his word, "what will the princes of all Europe do when they find his Majesty elected king of France, and grown by increase of power so formidable to the world? Can it be doubted that they will fly to arms at once, and give all their support to the King of Navarre, heretic though he be? What motive had so many princes to traverse Philip's designs in the Netherlands, but desire to destroy the enormous power which they feared? Therefore had the Queen of England, although refusing the sovereignty, defended the independence of the Netherlands these fifteen years.

"However desirable," continued Mayenne, "that this universal monarchy, for which the house of Austria has so long been working, should be established, yet the king is too prudent not to see the difficulties in his way. Although he has conquered Portugal, he is prevented by the fleets of Holland and England from taking possession of the richest of the Portuguese possessions, the islands and the Indies. He will find in France insuperable objections to his election as king, for he could in this case well reproach the Leaguers with having been changed from Frenchmen into Spaniards. He must see that his case is hopeless in France, he who for thirty years has been in vain endeavouring to re-establish his authority in the Netherlands. It would be impossible in the present position of affairs to become either the king or the protector of France. The dignity of France allows it not."[32]

[32] De Thou, xii. 13–24.

Mayenne then insisted on the necessity of a truce with the royalists or politicians, and, assembling the estates at the Louvre on the 4th July, he read a written paper declining for the moment to hold an election for king.[33]

John Baptist Tassis, next day, replied by declaring that in this case Philip would send no more succours of men or money; for that the only effectual counter-poison to the pretended conversion of the Prince of Béarne was the immediate election of a king.[34]

Thus did Mayenne escape from the snare in which the Spaniards thought to catch the man who, as they now knew, was changing every day, and was true to nothing save his own interests.

And now the great day had come. The conversion of Henry to the Roman faith, fixed long before for the 23rd July, 1593, formally took place at the time appointed.[35] From six in the morning till the stroke of noon did Henry listen to the exhortations and expoundings of the learned prelates and doctors whom he had convoked, the politic Archbishop of Bourges taking the lead in this long-expected instruction. After six mortal hours had come to an end, the king rose from his knees, somewhat wearied, but entirely instructed and convinced. He thanked the bishops for having taught him that of which he was before quite ignorant, and assured them that, after having invoked the light of the Holy Ghost upon his musings, he should think seriously over what they had just taught him, in order to come to a resolution salutary to himself and to the State.[36]

Nothing could be more candid. Next day, at eight in the morning, there was a great show in the cathedral of Saint Denis, and the population of Paris, notwithstanding the prohibition of the League authorities, rushed thither in immense crowds to witness the ceremony of the reconciliation of the king. Henry went to the church, clothed as became a freshly purified heretic, in white satin doublet and hose, white silk stockings, and white silk shoes with white roses in them; but

[33] De Thou, xii. 24. [34] Ibid. [35] Ibid. 30–35. [36] Ibid.

with a black hat and a black mantle.[37] There was a great procession with blare of trumpet and beat of drum. The streets were strewn with flowers.

As Henry entered the great portal of the church, he found the Archbishop of Bourges, seated in state, effulgent in mitre and chasuble, and surrounded by other magnificent prelates in gorgeous attire.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" said the archbishop.

"I am the king," meekly replied Henry, "and I demand to be received into the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church."

"Do you wish it sincerely?" asked the prelate.

"I wish it with all my heart," said the king.[38]

Then throwing himself on his knees, the Béarne—great champion of the Huguenots—protested before God that he would live and die in the Catholic faith, and that he renounced all heresy. A passage was with difficulty opened through the crowd, and he was then led to the high altar, amid the acclamations of the people. Here he knelt devoutly and repeated his protestations. His unction and contrition were most impressive, and the people, of course, wept piteously. The king, during the progress of the ceremony, with hands clasped together and adoring the Eucharist with his eyes, or, as the Host was elevated, smiting himself thrice upon the breast, was a model of passionate devotion.[39]

Afterwards he retired to a pavilion behind the altar, where the archbishop confessed and absolved him. Then the Te Deum sounded, and high mass was celebrated by the Bishop of Nantes. Then, amid acclamations and blessings, and with largess to the crowd, the king returned to the monastery of Saint Denis, where he dined amid a multitude of spectators, who thronged so thickly around him that his dinner-table was nearly overset. These were the very Parisians, who, but

[37] Fontanieu portefeuilles, Nos. 416, 417, cited by Capefigue, vi. 325.

[38] Ibid. De Thou, *ubi sup.*

[39] "La devotion fut remarquée tres grande en sa Maj. laquelle pendant la consecration et elevation de l'Eucharistie eut perpetuellement les mains jointes, les yeux adorant l'Eucharistie, ayant frappé sa poitrine trois fois tant a l'elevation de Eucharistie que du calice."—Font. portefeuilles, *ubi sup*

three years before, had been feeding on rats and dogs and dead men's bones, and the bodies of their own children, rather than open their gates to this same Prince of Béarne.

Now, although Mayenne had set strong guards at those gates, and had most strictly prohibited all egress, the city was emptied of its populace, which pressed in transports of adoration[40] around the man so lately the object of their hate. Yet few could seriously believe that much change had been effected in the inner soul of him, whom the legate, and the Spaniard, and the holy father at Rome still continued to denounce as the vilest of heretics and the most infamous of impostors.

The comedy was admirably played out and was entirely successful. It may be supposed that the chief actor was, however, somewhat wearied. In private, he mocked at all this ecclesiastical mummery, and described himself as heartily sick of the business. "I arrived here last evening," he wrote to the beautiful Gabrielle, "and was importuned with 'God save you' till bed-time. In regard to the Leaguers I am of the order of St. Thomas. I am beginning to-morrow morning to talk to the bishops, besides those I told you about yesterday. At this moment of writing I have a hundred of these importunates on my shoulders, who will make me hate Saint Denis as much as you hate Mantes. 'Tis to-morrow that I take the perilous leap. I kiss a million times the beautiful hands of my angel and the mouth of my dear mistress."[41]

A truce—renewed at intervals—with the Leaguers lasted till the end of the year. The Duke of Nevers was sent on special mission to Rome to procure the holy father's consent to the great heretic's reconciliation to the Church, and he was instructed to make the king's submission in terms so wholesale and so abject that even some of the life-long papists of France were disgusted, while every honest Protestant in Europe shrank into himself for shame.[42] But Clement, overawed by

[40] De Thou, xii. 35.

[41] Mem. de M. de l'Estoile, MS. Cot. P. No. 30, cited by Capefigue, vi. 354.

[42] "Herewith enclosed," wrote the English envoy, "your lordship shall receive a copy of the request which M. de Nevers presented to the pope on the king's behalf—by the sight whereof

Philip and his ambassador, was deaf to all the representations of the French envoy. He protested that he would not believe in the sincerity of the Béarne's conversion unless an angel from Heaven should reveal it to him. So Nevers left Rome highly exasperated, and professing that he would rather have lost a leg, that he would rather have been sewn in a sack and tossed into the Tiber, than bear back such a message. The pope ordered the prelates who had accompanied Nevers to remain in Rome and be tried by the Inquisition for misprision of heresy, but the duke placed them by his side and marched out of the Porta del Popolo with them, threatening to kill any man who should attempt to enforce the command.[43]

Meantime it became necessary to follow up the St. Denis comedy with a still more exhilarating popular spectacle. The heretic had been purified, confessed, absolved. It was time for a consecration. But there was a difficulty. Although the fever of loyalty to the ancient house of Bourbon, now redeemed from its worship of the false gods, was spreading contagiously through the provinces; although all the white silk in Lyons had been cut into scarves and banners to celebrate the reconciliation of the candid king with mother Church; although that ancient city was ablaze with bonfires and illuminations, while its streets ran red, with blood no longer, but with wine; and although Madam League, so lately the object of fondest adoration, was now publicly burned in the effigy of a grizzly hag;[44] yet Paris still held for that decrepit beldame, and closed its gates to the Béarnese.

The city of Rheims, too, had not acknowledged the former Huguenot, and it was at Rheims, in the church of St. Rémy,

it will appear to your lo. how abjectly he doth therein debase the king's authority and dignity, wherewith the *most superstitious Catholics here are so despited*, as they promise to procure the same to be disavowed by the courts of parliament as derogating from the dignity of the Gallican Church." Edmonds (who was secretary to Sir H. Umpton, and in his absence agent or chargé d'affaires) to Burghley, 30 Dec. 1593. (S. P. Office MS.) Compare De Thou, xii. 38, and Bor. B. xxxii. p. 151.

[43] De Thou, xii. 83–94.

[44] Ibid. 114.

that the Holy Bottle was preserved. With what chrism, by what prelate, should the consecration of Henry be performed? Five years before, the League had proposed in the estates of Blois to place among the fundamental laws of the kingdom that no king should be considered a legitimate sovereign whose head had not been anointed by the bishop at Rheims with oil from that holy bottle. But it was now decided that to ascribe a monopoly of sanctity to that prelate and to that bottle would be to make a schism in the Church.[45]

Moreover it was discovered that there was a chrism in existence still more efficacious than the famous oil of St. Rémy. One hundred and twelve years before the baptism of Clovis, St. Martin had accidentally tumbled down stairs, and lay desperately bruised and at the point of death. But, according to Sulpicius Severus, an angel had straightway descended from heaven, and with a miraculous balsam had anointed the contusions of the saint, who next day felt no farther inconveniences from his fall. The balsam had ever since been preserved in the church of Marmoutier near Tours. Here, then, was the most potent of unguents brought directly from heaven. To mix a portion thereof with the chrism of consecration was clearly more judicious than to make use of the holy bottle, especially as the holy bottle was not within reach. The monks of Marmoutier consented to lend the sacred phial containing the famous oil of St. Martin for the grand occasion of the royal consecration.

Accompanied by a strong military escort provided by Giles de Souvri, governor of Touraine, a deputation of friars brought the phial to Chartres, where the consecration was to take place. Prayers were offered up, without ceasing, in the monastery during their absence that no mishap should befal the sacred treasure. When the monks arrived at Chartres, four young barons of the first nobility were assigned to them as hostages for the safe restoration of the phial, which was then borne in triumph to the cathedral, the streets through which it was carried being covered with tapestry. There was

[45] De Thou, xii. 120–129.

a great ceremony, a splendid consecration; six bishops, with
26 Feb. mitres on their heads and in gala robes, officiating;
1594. after which the king knelt before the altar and took the customary oath.[46]

Thus the champion of the fierce Huguenots, the well-beloved of the dead La Noue and the living Duplessis Mornay, the devoted knight of the heretic Queen Elizabeth, the sworn ally of the stout Dutch Calvinists, was pompously reconciled to that Rome which was the object of their hatred and their fear.

The admirably arranged spectacles of the instruction at St. Denis and the consecration at Chartres were followed on the day of the vernal equinox by a third and most conclusive ceremony.

A secret arrangement had been made with De Cossé-
21-22 Mar. Brissac, governor of Paris, by the king, according
1594. to which the gates of Paris were at last to be opened to him.[47] The governor obtained a high price for his services—three hundred thousand livres in hard cash, thirty thousand a year for his life, and the truncheon of marshal of France.[48] Thus purchased, Brissac made his preparations with remarkable secrecy and skill. Envoy Ybarra, who had scented something suspicious in the air, had gone straight to the governor for information, but the keen Spaniard was thrown out by the governor's ingenuous protestations of ignorance. The next morning, March 22nd, was stormy and rainy, and long before daylight Ybarra, still uneasy despite the statements of Brissac, was wandering about the streets of Paris when he became the involuntary witness of an extraordinary spectacle.[49]

Through the wind and the rain came trampling along the dark streets of the capital a body of four thousand troopers and lansquenettes. Many torch-bearers attended on the procession, whose flambeaux threw a lurid light upon the scene.

[46] De Thou, xii. 120–129. [47] Ibid. 138–141. [48] Capefigue, vii. 122.

[49] Ybarra to ——, 28 March, 1594. (Arch. de Simancas, B. 79, $\frac{222}{}$, cited by Capefigue, vii. 151.)

There, surrounded by the swart and grizzly bearded visages of these strange men-at-arms, who were discharging their arquebuses, as they advanced upon any bystanders likely to oppose their progress ; in the very midst of this sea of helmed heads, the envoy was enabled to recognise the martial figure of the Prince of Béarne. Armed to the teeth, with sword in hand and dagger at side, the hero of Ivry rode at last through the barriers which had so long kept him from his capital. "'Twas like enchantment," said Ybarra.[50] The first Bourbon entered the city through the same gate out of which the last Valois had, five years before, so ignominiously fled. It was a midnight surprise, although not fully accomplished until near the dawn of day. It was not a triumphal entrance ; nor did Henry come as the victorious standard-bearer of a great principle. He had defeated the League in many battle-fields, but the League still hissed defiance at him from the very hearthstone of his ancestral palace. He had now crept, in order to conquer, even lower than the League itself ; and casting off his Huguenot skin at last, he had soared over the heads of all men, the presiding genius of the holy Catholic Church.

Twenty-one years before, he had entered the same city on the conclusion of one of the truces which had varied the long monotony of the religious wars of France. The youthful son of Antony Bourbon and Joan of Albret had then appeared as the champion and the idol of the Huguenots. In the same year had come the fatal nuptials with the bride of St. Bartholomew, the first Catholic conversion of Henry and the massacre at which the world still shudders.

Now he was chief of the "Politicians," and sworn supporter of the Council of Trent. Earnest Huguenots were hanging their heads in despair.

He represented the principle of national unity against national dismemberment by domestic treason and foreign violence. Had that principle been his real inspiration, as it was in truth his sole support, history might judge him more

[50] MS. last cited.

leniently. Had he relied upon it entirely it might have been strong enough to restore him to the throne of his ancestors, without the famous religious apostacy with which his name is for ever associated. It is by no means certain that permanent religious toleration might not have been the result of his mounting the throne, only when he could do so without renouncing the faith of his fathers. A day of civilization may come perhaps, sooner or later, when it will be of no earthly cousequence to their fellow creatures to what creed, what Christian church, what religious dogma kings or humbler individuals may be partial; when the relations between man and his Maker shall be undefiled by political or social intrusion. But the day will never come when it will be otherwise than damaging to public morality and humiliating to human dignity to forswear principle for a price, and to make the most awful of mysteries the subject of political legerdemain and theatrical buffoonery.

The so-called conversion of the king marks an epoch in human history. It strengthened the Roman Church and gave it an indefinite renewal of life; but it sapped the foundations of religious faith. The appearance of Henry the Huguenot as the champion of the Council of Trent was of itself too biting an epigram not to be extensively destructive. Whether for good or ill, religion was fast ceasing to be the mainspring of political combinations, the motive of great wars and national convulsions. The age of religion was to be succeeded by the age of commerce.

But the king was now on his throne. All Paris was in rapture. There was Te Deum with high mass in Notre Dame, and the populace was howling itself hoarse with rapture in honour of him so lately the object of the general curse. Even the Sorbonne declared in favour of the reclaimed heretic,[51] and the decision of those sages had vast influence with less enlightened mortals. There was nothing left for the Duke of Feria but to take himself off and make Latin orations in favour of the Infanta elsewhere, if fit audi-

[51] April 22, 1594. Capefigue, vii. 183–4.

ence elsewhere could be found. A week after the entrance of Henry, the Spanish garrison accordingly was allowed to leave Paris with the honours of war. 28 March, 1594.

"We marched out at 2 P.M.," wrote the duke to his master, "with closed ranks, colours displayed, and drums beating. First came the Italians and then the Spaniards, in the midst of whom was myself on horseback, with the Walloons marching near me. The Prince of Béarne"—it was a solace to the duke's heart, of which he never could be deprived, to call the king by that title—"was at a window over the gate of St. Denis through which we took our departure. He was dressed in light grey, with a black hat surmounted by a great white feather. Our displayed standards rendered him no courteous salute as we passed."[52]

Here was another solace!

Thus had the game been lost and won, but Philip as usual did not acknowledge himself beaten. Mayenne, too, continued to make the most fervent promises to all that was left of the confederates. He betook himself to Brussels, and by the king's orders was courteously received by the Spanish authorities in the Netherlands. In the midst of the tempest now rapidly destroying all rational hopes, Philip still clung to Mayenne as to a spar in the shipwreck. For the king ever possessed the virtue, if it be one, of continuing to believe himself invincible and infallible, when he had been defeated in every quarter, and when his calculations had all proved ridiculous mistakes.

When his famous Armada had been shattered and sunk, have we not seen him peevishly requiring Alexander Farnese to construct a new one immediately and to proceed therewith to conquer England out of hand? Was it to be expected that he would renounce his conquest of France, although the legitimate king had entered his capital, had reconciled himself to the Church, and was on the point of obtaining forgiveness of the pope? If the Prince of Béarne had already destroyed

[52] Feria to Philip, Arch. de Simancas (Paris), B. 78, $\frac{62}{2}$ in Capefigue, vii. 161.

the Holy League, why should not the Duke of Mayenne and Archduke Ernest make another for him, and so conquer France without further delay?

But although it was still possible to deceive the king, who in the universality of his deceptive powers was so prone to delude himself, it was difficult even for so accomplished an intriguer as Mayenne to hoodwink much longer the shrewd Spaniards who were playing so losing a game against him.

"Our affairs in France," said Ybarra, "are in such condition that we are losing money and character there, and are likely to lose all the provinces here, if things are not soon taken up in a large and energetic manner. Money and troops are what is wanted on a great scale for France. The king's agents are mightily discontented with Mayenne, and with reason; but they are obliged to dissimulate and to hold their tongues. We can send them no assistance from these regions, unless from down yonder you send us the cloth and the scissors to cut it with."[53]

And the Archduke Ernest, although he invited Mayenne to confer with him at Brussels, under the impression that he could still keep him and the Duke of Guise from coming to an arrangement with Béarne, hardly felt more confidence in the man than did Feria or Ybarra. "Since the loss of Paris," said Ernest, "I have had a letter from Mayenne, in which, deeply affected by that event, he makes me great offers, even to the last drop of his blood, vowing never to abandon the cause of the League. But of the intentions and inner mind of this man I find such vague information, that I don't dare to expect more stability from him than may be founded upon his own interest."[54]

[53] Ybarra to the Secretaries, 18 Jan. 1594. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Charles Mansfeld, too, held the same language. "I have had a talk with Tassis," he wrote to the king, "and we both agree that Mayenne has always been managing affairs for his own ends, cheating your Majesty, and this opinion I have always held."

[54] Ernest to Philip, 30 March, 1594. Ibid. The legate had at last informed Mayenne that "the actions of Navarre were not of men, but the works of God's hand, and that the forces of Spain were not sufficient to prevent him establishing himself absolute king of France, and so it would be better that he should be established by means of a general peace." Sumário de una relacion que hize Ascano Solferini,

And so Mayenne came to Brussels and passed three days with the archduke. "He avows himself ready to die in our cause," said Ernest. "If your Majesty will give men and money enough, he will undertake so to deal with Béarne that he shall not think himself safe in his own house." The archduke expressed his dissatisfaction to Mayenne that with the money he had already received, so little had been accomplished, but he still affected a confidence which he was far from feeling, "because," said he, "it is known that Mayenne is already treating with Béarne. If he has not concluded those arrangements, it is because Béarne now offers him less money than before."[55] The amount of dissimulation, politely so-called, practised by the grandees of that age, to say nothing of their infinite capacity for pecuniary absorption, makes the brain reel and enlarges one's ideas of the human faculties as exerted in certain directions. It is doubtful whether plain Hans Miller or Hans Baker could have risen to such a level.[56]

The Duke of Feria and the other Spanish envoys had long since thoroughly understood the character of Mayenne —that great broker between Philip, the Béarnese, and the League.

27 April, 1594. (Arch de Simancas MS.) Philip replied to the Archduke that Mayenne could scarcely be acquitted of evil intentions in regard to the loss of Paris, but that nevertheless it was necessary to affect confidence in him. The war would be carried on, and the king had so informed the pope. The salaries paid to personages in France before the loss of Paris would be continued. Philip to Ernest 4 June, 1594. (Arch de Simancas MS.)

[55] Relacion de cartas del Archiduque, para S. Ma sobre las cosas de Francia. (Arch de Simancas MS.)

[56] Even so late as the winter of this year, Mayenne wrote in a deeply injured tone to the archduke, expressing surprise that "pledges should be demanded of him, and suspicions entertained concerning him, after all the proofs he had given of his fidelity and constancy." Mayenne to Ernest, Sept. 1, 1594. (Arch de Simancas MS.) "He offers very magnificently to die for the cause," said Ernest, "but his deeds resolve themselves into remote and general offers,and into begging for ready money in present payment for what he is to do for your My. in future." Ernest to Philip, 6 Sept. 1594. Ibid. And to the very last moment Philip persisted in endeavouring to keep Mayenne about his hook by allowing him to nibble at very small bait. "You must try to keep him dependent on me," he said to Ernest, "not giving him any more money than is necessary to prevent him from falling away entirely, for to content his appetite completely there is not a fortune in the world that would suffice." Philip to Ernest, 2 Dec. 1594. Ibid. Compare paper of Diego de Pimental, 23 Nov. 1594. Ibid.

Feria wrote a despatch to the king, denouncing Mayenne as false, pernicious to the cause of Spain and of catholicism, thoroughly self-seeking and vile, and as now most traitorous to the cause of the confederacy, engaged in surrendering its strong places to the enemy, and preparing to go over to the Prince of Béarne.

August, 1594.

"If," said he, "I were to recount all his base tricks, I should go on till midnight, and perhaps till to-morrow morning."[57]

This letter, being intercepted, was sent with great glee by Henry IV., not to the royal hands for which it was destined, but to the Duke of Mayenne. Great was the wrath of that injured personage as he read such libellous truths. He forthwith fulminated a scathing reply, addressed to Philip II., in which he denounced the Duke of Feria as "a dirty ignoramus, an impudent coward, an impostor, and a blind thief;" adding, after many other unsavoury epithets, "but I will do him an honour which he has not merited, proving him a liar with my sword; and I humbly pray your Majesty to grant me this favour and to pardon my just grief, which causes me to depart from the respect due to your Majesty when I speak of this impostor who has thus wickedly torn my reputation."[58]

His invectives were, however, much stronger than his arguments in defence of that tattered reputation. The defiance to mortal combat went for nothing; and, in the course of the next year, the injured Mayenne turned his back on Philip and his Spaniards, and concluded his bargain with the Prince of Béarne. He obtained good terms: the government of Burgundy, payment of his debts, and a hundred and twenty thousand crowns in hard cash.[59] It is not on record that the man of his word, of credit, and of truth, ever restored a penny of the vast sums which he had received from Philip to carry on the business of the League.

Subsequently the duke came one very hot summer's-day

[57] Feria to Philip, Aug. 1594. MSS. de Colbert, vol. 33, in Capefigue, vii. 229.
[58] Capefigue, vii. 229, *seqq.*
[59] Ibid. 333–5.

to Monceaux to thank the king, as he expressed it, for "delivering him from Spanish arrogance and Italian wiles;" and having got with much difficulty upon his knees, was allowed to kiss the royal hand. Henry then insisted upon walking about with him through the park at a prodigious rate, to show him all the improvements, while the duke panted, groaned, and perspired in his vain efforts to keep pace with his new sovereign.

"If I keep this fat fellow walking about in the sun much longer," whispered the king to De Béthune, who was third in the party, "I shall be sufficiently avenged for all the mischief he has done us."

At last, when the duke was forced to admit himself to be on the point of expiring with fatigue, he was dismissed to the palace with orders to solace himself with a couple of bottles of excellent wine of Arbois, expressly provided for him by the king's direction. And this was all the punishment ever inflicted by the good-humoured monarch on the corpulent conspirator.[60]

The Duke of Guise made his arrangements with the ex-Huguenot on even better terms and at a still earlier day;[61] while Joyeuse and Mercœur stood out a good while and higgled hard for conditions. "These people put such a high price on themselves," said one of Henry's diplomatists, "that one loses almost more than one gains in buying them. They strip and plunder us even in our nakedness, and we are obliged, in order to conciliate such harpies, to employ all that we can scrape out of our substance and our blood. I think, however, that we ought to gain them by whatever means and at whatever price."[62]

[60] Memoires de Sully, liv. viii. 454. This interview was in the spring of 1596, while Henry was occupied with the siege of La Fere. At the very same time, possibly on the self-same day, Mayenne was sending an emissary to Philip, begging to have his allowance continued, and the king left it to his governor-general to decide whether to do so or not. Philip to Archduke Albert, 24 April, 1596. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[61] Capefigue, vii. 321, 322.

[62] "Je ne doute point que l'accomodement de M. de Mayenne ne soit fait et j'espère que celuy de M. de Joyeuse se fera encore. M. de Mercœur se rend plus difficile. Ces gens là se mettent à si haut prix qu'on perd presque plus qu'on ne gagne a

Thus Henry IV., the man whom so many contemporary sages had for years been rebuking or ridiculing for his persistency in a hopeless attempt to save his country from dismemberment, to restore legitimate authority, and to resist the "holy confederacy" of domestic traitors, aided by foreign despots and sympathizers, was at last successful, and the fratricidal war in France was approaching its only possible conclusion.

But, alas! the hopes of those who loved the reformed Church as well as they loved their country were sadly blasted by the apostasy of their leader. From the most eminent leaders of the Huguenots there came a wail, which must have penetrated even to the well-steeled heart of the cheerful Gascon. "It will be difficult," they said, "to efface very soon from your memory the names of the men whom the sentiment of a common religion, association in the same perils and persecutions, a common joy in the same deliverance, and the long experience of so many faithful services, have engraved there with a pencil of diamond. The remembrance of these things pursues you and accompanies you everywhere; it interrupts your most important affairs, your most ardent pleasures, your most profound slumber, to represent to you, as in a picture, yourself to yourself: yourself not as you are to-day, but such as you were when, pursued to the death by the greatest princes of Europe, you went on conducting to the harbour of safety the little vessel against which so many tempests were beating."[63]

The States of the Dutch republic, where the affair of

les acheter. Ils nous dépouillent dans notre nudité mesme, et il faut employer pour reconcilier ces harpies tout ce que nous pouvons tirer de notre substance et de notre sang. Je crois neantmoins que nous les devons gaigner par quelque moyen et à quelque prix que ce puisse être." Bongars. Lettres, pp. 331, 332.

[63] Requête au Roy par ceux de la religion, 1593. Colbert MSS. vol. xxxi. *apud* Capefigue, vi. 317.

"Je plains et pleurs au fond de mon ame la gehenne de S. Maj," wrote Duplessis Mornay, 11 Aug. 1593, to De Lomenie, "je vous prie de lui dire que s'il lui prend jamais envie de sortir de cette captivité et spirituelle et temporelle, je ne puis croistre de fidelité mais je doublerai de courage . . . Ils ne lui donnent pas la paix de l'estat et lui ostent la paix de la conscience. . . . . Ils ne lui rendent point son royaume, car c'est à Dieu et non au diable à le donner, et lui faut renoncer autant qu'en eulx est le royaume des cieux." Mem. et Correspond. de Duplessis Mornay, iv. 511.

Henry's conversion was as much a matter of domestic personal interest as it could be in France—for religion up to that epoch was the true frontier between nation and nation —debated the question most earnestly while it was yet doubtful. It was proposed to send a formal deputation to the king, in order to divert him, if possible, from the fatal step which he was about to take. After ripe deliberation, however, it was decided to leave the matter "in the hands of God Almighty, and to pray Him earnestly to guide the issue to His glory and the welfare of the Churches." [64]

The Queen of England was, as might be supposed, beside herself with indignation, and, in consequence of the great apostasy, and of her chronic dissatisfaction with the manner in which her contingent of troops had been handled in France, she determined to withdraw every English soldier from the support of Henry's cause. The unfortunate French ambassador in London was at his wits' ends. He vowed that he could not sleep of nights, and that the gout and the cholic, to which he was always a martyr, were nothing to the anguish which had now come upon his soul and brain, such as he had never suffered since the bloody day of St. Bartholomew.[65]

"Ah, my God!" said he to Burghley, "is it possible that her just choler has so suddenly passed over the great glory which she has acquired by so many benefits and liberalities?" [66] But he persuaded himself that her majesty would after all not persist in her fell resolution. To do so, he vowed, would only be boiling milk for the French papists, who would be sure to make the most of the occasion in order to precipitate the king into the abyss, to the border of which they had already brought him. He so dreaded the ire of the queen that he protested he was trembling all over merely to see the pen of his secretary wagging as he dictated his despatch.[67] Nevertheless it was his terrible duty to face her in her wrath, and he implored the lord treasurer to accom-

[64] Bor, III. 706.
[65] Beauvoir la Nocle to Burghley, 24 Aug. 1593. (S. P. Office MS.)
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.

pany him and to shield him at the approaching interview "Protect me," he cried, "by your wisdom from the ire of this great princess; for by the living God, when I see her enraged against any person whatever I wish myself in Calcutta, fearing her anger like death itself."[68]

When all was over, Henry sent De Morlans as special envoy to communicate the issue to the Governments of England and of Holland. But the queen, although no longer so violent, was less phlegmatic than the States-General, and refused to be comforted. She subsequently receded, however, from her determination to withdraw her troops from France.

"Ah! what grief; ah! what regrets; ah! what groans, have I felt in my soul," she wrote, "at the sound of the news brought to me by Morlans! My God! Is it possible that any wordly respect can efface the terror of Divine wrath? Can we by reason even expect a good sequel to such iniquitous acts? He who has maintained and preserved you by His mercy, can you imagine that he permits you to walk alone in your utmost need? 'Tis bad to do evil that good may come of it. Meantime I shall not cease to put you in the first rank of my devotions, in order that the hands of Esau may not spoil the blessings of Jacob. As to your promises to me of friendship and fidelity, I confess to have dearly deserved them, nor do I repent, provided you do not change your Father—otherwise I shall be your bastard sister by the father's side—for I shall ever love a natural better than an adopted one. I desire that God may guide you in a straight road and a better path. Your most sincere sister in the old fashion. As to the new, I have nothing to do with it.

"ELIZABETH R."[69]

[68] Beauvoir la Nocle to Burghley, 24 Aug. 1593. (S. P. Office MS.)

[69] Bibl. du Roi, MSS. Colbert in fol. M. R. D. vol. xvi. fol. 329, *apud* Capefigue, vi. 352.

CHAPTER XXX.

Prince Maurice lays siege to Gertruydenberg — Advantages of the new system of warfare — Progress of the besieging operations — Superiority of Maurice's manœuvres — Adventure of Count Philip of Nassau — Capitulation of Gertruydenberg — Mutiny among the Spanish troops — Attempt of Verdugo to retake Coeworden — Suspicions of treason in the English garrison at Ostend — Letter of Queen Elizabeth to Sir Edward Norris on the subject — Second attempt on Coeworden — Assault on Groningen by Maurice — Second adventure of Philip of Nassau — Narrow escape of Prince Maurice — Surrender of Groningen — Particulars of the siege — Question of religious toleration — Progress of the United Netherlands — Condition of the "obedient" Netherlands — Incompetency of Peter Mansfeld as Governor — Archduke Ernest, the successor of Farnese — Difficulties of his position —His unpopularity — Great achievements of the republicans — Triumphal entry of Ernest into Brussels and Antwerp — Magnificence of the spectacle — Disaffection of the Spanish troops — Great military rebellion — Philip's proposal to destroy the English fleet — His assassination plans — Plot to poison Queen Elizabeth — Conspiracies against Prince Maurice — Futile attempts at negociation — Proposal of a marriage between Henry and the Infanta — Secret mission from Henry to the King of Spain — Special dispatch to England and the States — Henry obtains further aid from Queen Elizabeth and the States-Council—Anxiety of the Protestant countries to bring about a war with Spain — Aspect of affairs at the close of the year 1594.

While Philip's world-empire seemed in one direction to be so rapidly fading into cloudland there were substantial possessions of the Spanish crown which had been neglected in Brabant and Friesland.

Two very important cities still held for the King of Spain within the territories of what could now be fairly considered the United Dutch Republic—St. Gertruydenberg and Groningen.

Early in the spring of 1593, Maurice had completed his preparations for a siege, and on the 24th March appeared before Gertruydenberg.

It was a stately, ancient city, important for its wealth, its strength, and especially for its position. For without its pos-

session even the province of Holland could hardly consider itself mistress of its own little domains. It was seated on the ancient Meuse, swollen as it approached the sea almost to the dimension of a gulf, while from the south another stream, called the Donge, very brief in its course, but with considerable depth of water, came to mingle itself with the Meuse, exactly under the walls of the city.

The site of the place was so low that it was almost hidden and protected by its surrounding dykes. These afforded means of fortification, which had been well improved. Both by nature and art the city was one of the strongholds of the Netherlands.

Maurice had given the world a lesson in the beleaguering science at the siege of Steenwyk, such as had never before been dreamt of; but he was resolved that the operations before Gertruydenberg should constitute a masterpiece.

Nothing could be more beautiful as a production of military art, nothing, to the general reader, more insipid than its details.

On the land side, Hohenlo's headquarters were at Ramsdonck, a village about a German mile to the east of Gertruydenberg. Maurice himself was established on the west side of the city.[1] Two bridges constructed across the Donge facilitated the communications between the two camps, while great quantities of planks and brush were laid down across the swampy roads to make them passable for waggon-trains and artillery. The first care of the young general, whose force was not more than twenty thousand men, was to protect himself rather than to assail the town.

His lines extended many miles in a circuit around the place, and his forts, breastworks, and trenches were very numerous.

The river was made use of as a natural and almost impassable ditch of defence, and windmills were freely employed to pump water into the shallows in one direction, while

[1] See, for the details of this remarkable siege, Meteren, xvi. 321, 322. Bor, III. 690–698. Reyd, x. 198–205. Mulder's Duyck, 194–245, especially. Bentivoglio, P. III. lib. i. pp. 383–387. Coloma, vi. 119–122.

in others the outer fields, in quarters whence a relieving force might be expected, were turned into lakes by the same machinery. Farther outside, a system of palisade work of caltrops and man-traps—sometimes in the slang of the day called Turkish ambassadors—made the country for miles around impenetrable or very disagreeable to cavalry.[2] In a shorter interval than would have seemed possible, the battlements and fortifications of the besieging army had risen like an exhalation out of the morass. The city of Gertruydenberg was encompassed by another city as extensive and apparently as impregnable as itself. Then, for the first time in that age, men thoroughly learned the meaning of that potent implement the spade.

Three thousand pioneers worked night and day with pick-axe and shovel. The soldiers liked the business; for every man so employed received his ten stivers a day additional wages, punctually paid, and felt moreover that every stroke was bringing the work nearer to its conclusion.

The Spaniards no longer railed at Maurice as a hedger and ditcher. When he had succeeded in bringing a hundred great guns to bear upon the beleaguered city they likewise ceased to sneer at heavy artillery.

The Kartowen and half Kartowen were no longer considered "espanta vellacos."

Meantime, from all the country round, the peasants flocked within the lines. Nowhere in Europe were provisions so plentiful and cheap as in the Dutch camp. Nowhere was a readier market for agricultural products, prompter payment, or more perfect security for the life and property of non-combatants. Not so much as a hen's egg was taken unlawfully.[3] The country people found themselves more at ease within Maurice's lines than within any other part of the provinces, obedient or revolted. They ploughed and sowed and reaped at their pleasure, and no more striking example was ever afforded of the humanizing effect of science upon the barbarism of war, than in this siege of Gertruydenberg.[4]

[2] Reyd, *ubi sup.* [3] Duyck, 201. [4] Meteren, Bor, Reyd, *ubi sup.*

Certainly it was the intention of the prince to take his city, and when he fought the enemy it was his object to kill; but, as compared with the bloody work which Alva, and Romero, and Requesens, and so many others had done in those doomed provinces, such war-making as this seemed almost like an institution for beneficent and charitable purposes.

Visitors from the neighbourhood, from other provinces, from foreign countries, came to witness the extraordinary spectacle, and foreign generals repaired to the camp of Maurice to take practical lessons in the new art of war.[5]

Old Peter Ernest Mansfeld, who was nominal governor of the Spanish Netherlands since the death of Farnese, rubbed his eyes and stared aghast when the completeness of the preparations for reducing the city at last broke in upon his mind. Count Fuentes was the true and confidential regent however until the destined successor to Parma should arrive; but Fuentes, although he had considerable genius for assassination, as will hereafter appear, and was an experienced and able commander of the old-fashioned school, was no match for Maurice in the scientific combinations on which the new system was founded.

In vain did the superannuated Peter call aloud upon his son and governor, Count Charles, to assist him in this dire dilemma. That artillery general had gone with a handful of Germans, Walloons, and other obedient Netherlanders—too few to accomplish anything abroad, too many to be spared from the provinces—to besiege Noyon in France.[6] But what signified the winning or losing of such a place as Noyon at exactly the moment when the Prince of Béarne, assisted by the able generalship of the Archbishop of Bourges, had

[5] "Un des mes amis," wrote Bongars, envoy of Henry IV., "qui est allé dans le camp des Hollandois par la seule curiosité de le voir, m'a ecrit qu'il n'a jamais ni vu ni entendu parler d'une armée campée ou il parut plus de courage et en même temps plus de discipline. Il dit que les fortifications sont si elevées qu'elles egalent les ouvrages des anciens Romains et que tout s'y conduit avec tant d'ordre et de silence qu'on croirait plutôt voir l'etat paisible d'une ville que se conserve l'etat par le soin de ses magistrats et par l'obeissance de ses citoyens qu'une troupe confuse de gens armés."—Lettres, 65, p. 223.

[6] He had but 4300 foot and 800 horse. Charles Mansfeld to Fuentes, 5 April, 1593. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

just executed those famous flanking movements in the churches of St. Denis and Chartres, by which the world-empire had been effectually shattered, and Philip and the Pope completely out-manœuvred.

Better that the five thousand fighters under Charles Mansfeld had been around Gertruydenberg. His aged father did what he could. As many men as could be spared from the garrison of Antwerp and its neighbourhood were collected, but the Spaniards were reluctant to march, except under old Mondragon. That hero, who had done much of the hardest work, and had fought in most of the battles of the century, was nearly as old as the century. Being now turned of ninety, he thought best to keep house in Antwerp Castle. Accordingly twelve thousand foot and three thousand horse took the field under the more youthful Peter Ernest.[7] But Peter Ernest, when his son was not there to superintend his operations, was nothing but a testy octogenarian, while the two together were not equal to the little finger of Farnese, whom Philip would have displaced, had he not fortunately died.

"Nothing is to be expected out of this place but toads and poison," wrote Ybarra in infinite disgust to the two secretaries of state at Madrid. "I have done my best to induce Fuentes to accept that which the patent secured him, and Count Peter is complaining that Fuentes showed him the patent so late only to play him a trick. There is a rascally pack of meddlers here, and the worst of them all are the women, whom I particularly give to the devil. There is no end to the squabbles as to who shall take the lead in relieving Gertruydenberg." [8]

Mansfeld at last came ponderously up in the neighbourhood of Turnhout. There was a brilliant little skirmish, in the neighbourhood of this place, in which a hundred and fifty

[7] Relacion de la gente effectiva de S. M^d. para el socorro de S^t Gertruydenberg. With levies expected, the number is stated at 13,000 foot and 2600 horse, besides the forces under Verdugo. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[8] Ybarra to Don Cristoval Mora and Don Juan Idiaquez, from Antwerp, 22 May, 1593. (Ibid.)

Dutch cavalry under the famous brothers Bax defeated four hundred picked lancers of Spain and Italy.[9] But Mansfeld could get nothing but skirmishes. In vain he plunged about among the caltrops and man-traps. In vain he knocked at the fortifications of Hohenlo on the east and of Maurice on the west. He found them impracticable, impregnable, obdurate. It was Maurice's intention to take his town at as small sacrifice of life as possible. A trumpet was sent on some trifling business to Mansfeld, in reply to a communication made by the general to Maurice.

"Why does your master," said the choleric veteran to the trumpeter, "why does Prince Maurice, being a lusty young commander as he is, not come out of his trenches into the open field and fight me like a man, where honour and fame await him?"

"Because my master," answered the trumpeter, "means to live to be a lusty old commander like your excellency, and sees no reason to-day to give you an advantage."

At this the bystanders laughed, rather at the expense of the veteran.[10]

Meantime there were not many incidents within the lines or within the city to vary the monotony of the scientific siege.

On the land side, as has been seen, the city was enclosed and built out of human sight by another Gertruydenberg. On the wide estuary of the Meuse, a chain of war ships encircled the sea-front, in shape of a half moon, lying so close to each other that it was scarcely possible even for a messenger to swim out of a dark night.

The hardy adventurers who attempted that feat with tidings of despair were almost invariably captured.

This blockading fleet took regular part in the daily cannonade; while, on the other hand, the artillery practice from the land-batteries of Maurice and Hohenlo was more perfect than anything ever known before in the Netherlands or France.

[9] Bor, Meteren, Reyd, *ubi supra*. Duyck, 214, 215. Compare Coloma, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*

[10] Meteren, *ubi sup.* 322.

And the result was that in the course of the cannonade, which lasted nearly ninety days, not more than four houses in the city escaped injury. The approaches were brought, every hour, nearer and nearer to the walls. With subterranean lines converging in the form of the letter Y, the prince had gradually burrowed his way beneath the principal bastion.[11]

Hohenlo, representative of the older school of strategy, had on one occasion ventured to resist the authority of the commander-in-chief. He had constructed a fort at Ramsdonck. Maurice then commanded the erection of another, fifteen hundred yards farther back. It was as much a part of his purpose to defend himself against the attempts of Mansfeld's relieving force, as to go forward against the city. Hohenlo objected that it would be impossible to sustain himself against a sudden attack in so isolated a position. Maurice insisted. In the midst of the altercation Hohenlo called to the men engaged in throwing up the new fortifications: "Here, you captains and soldiers," he cried, "you are delivered up here to be butchered. You may drop work and follow me to the old fort."

"And I swear to you," said Maurice quietly, "that the first man who moves from this spot shall be hanged."

No one moved. The fort was completed and held to the end; Hohenlo sulkily acquiescing in the superiority which this stripling—his former pupil—had at last vindicated over all old-fashioned men-at-arms.[12]

From the same cause which was apt to render Hohenlo's services inefficient, the prince was apt to suffer inconvenience in the persons placed in still nearer relation to himself. Count Philip of Nassau, brother of the wise and valiant Lewis William, had already done much brilliant campaigning against the Spaniards both in France and the provinces. Unluckily, he was not only a desperate fighter but a mighty drinker, and one day, after a dinner-party and potent carouse at Colonel Brederode's quarters, he thought proper, in

[11] Bor, Meteren Reyd, Duyck, *ubi sup.* [12] Reyd, *ubi sup.* 203.

doublet and hose, without armour of any kind, to mount his horse, in order to take a solitary survey of the enemy's works. Not satisfied with this piece of reconnoitring—which he effected with much tipsy gravity, but probably without deriving any information likely to be of value to the commanding general—he then proceeded to charge in person a distant battery. The deed was not commendable in a military point of view. A fire was opened upon him at long range so soon as he was discovered, and at the same time the sergeant-major of his regiment and an equerry of Prince Maurice started in pursuit, determined to bring him off if possible, before his life had been thus absurdly sacrificed. Fortunately for him they came to the rescue in time, pulled him from his horse, and succeeded in bringing him away unharmed. The sergeant-major, however, Sinisky by name, while thus occupied in preserving the count's life, was badly wounded in the leg by a musket-shot from the fort ; which casualty was the only result of this after-dinner assault.[13]

As the siege proceeded, and as the hopes of relief died away, great confusion began to reign within the city. The
1 June, 1593. garrison, originally of a thousand veterans, besides burgher militia, had been much diminished. Two commandants of the place, one after another, had lost their lives. On the 1st of June, Governor De Masieres, Captain Mongyn, the father-confessor of the garrison, and two soldiers, being on the top of the great church tower taking observations, were all brought down with one cannon-shot.[14] Thus the uses of artillery were again proved to be something more than to scare cowards.

The final result seemed to have been brought about almost
24 June, 1593. by accident, if accident could be admitted as a factor in such accurate calculations as those of Maurice. On the 24th June Captains Haen and Bievry were relieving watch in the trenches near the great north ravelin of the town—a bulwark which had already been much undermined from below and weakened above. Being

[13] Duyck, 180. Compare Bor, Meteren, Reyd, *ubi sup.* [14] Duyck.

adventurous officers, it occurred to them suddenly to scale the wall of the fort and reconnoitre what was going on in the town. It was hardly probable that they would come back alive from the expedition, but they nevertheless threw some planks across the ditch, and taking a few soldiers with them, climbed cautiously up. Somewhat to his own surprise, still more to that of the Spanish sentinels, Bievry in a few minutes found himself within the ravelin. He was closely followed by Captain Haen, Captain Kalf, and by half a company of soldiers. The alarm was given. There was a fierce hand-to-hand struggle. Sixteen of the bold stormers fell, and nine of the garrison of the fort. The rest fled into the city. The governor of the place, Captain Gysant, rushing to the rescue without staying to put on his armour, was killed. Count Solms, on the other hand, came from the besieging camp into the ravelin to investigate the sudden uproar. To his profound astonishment he was met there, after a brief interval, by a deputation from the city, asking for terms of surrender. The envoys had already been for some little time looking in vain for a responsible person with whom to treat. When Maurice was informed of the propositions he thought it at first a trick; for he had known nothing of the little adventure of the three captains. Soon afterwards he came into a battery whither the deputies had been brought, and the terms of capitulation were soon agreed upon.[15]

Next day the garrison were allowed to go out with side-arms and personal baggage, and fifty waggons were lent them by the victor to bring their wounded men to Antwerp. 25 June, 1593.

Thus was Gertruydenberg surrendered in the very face of Peter Mansfeld, who only became aware of the fact by the salvos of artillery fired in honour of the triumph, and by the blaze of illumination which broke forth over camp and city.

The sudden result was an illustration of the prince's perfect arrangements. When Maurice rode into the town, he

[15] Duyck, 234, *seqq.* Meteren, Bor, Reyd, *ubi sup.*

found it strong enough and sufficiently well provisioned to have held out many a long day. But it had been demonstrated to the besieged that relief was impossible, and that the surrender on one day or another, after the siege operations should be brought to their close, was certain. The inexorable genius of the commander—skilled in a science which to the coarser war-makers of that age seemed almost superhuman—hovered above them like a fate. It was as well to succumb on the 24th June as to wait till the 24th July.[16]

Moreover the great sustaining principle—resistance to the foreigner—which had inspired the deeds of daring, the wonders of endurance, in the Dutch cities beleaguered so remorselessly by the Spaniard twenty years earlier in the century, was wanting.

In surrendering to the born Netherlander—the heroic chieftain of the illustrious house of Nassau—these Netherlanders were neither sullying their flag nor injuring their country. Enough had been done for military honour in the gallant resistance, in which a large portion of the garrison had fallen. Nor was that religious superstition so active within the city, which three years before had made miracles possible in Paris when a heretic sovereign was to be defied by his own subjects. It was known that even if the public ceremonies of the Catholic Church were likely to be suspended for a time after the surrender, at least the rights of individual conscience and private worship within individual

[16] Thus modestly did William Lewis, to whom so large a part of the glory of all these achievements belongs, express himself in a congratulatory letter to his cousin Maurice :—" J'estime de ne faire que mon devoir de congratuler V. E. d'une victoire si signalée, en ce qu'avez faict une preuve tant remarquable, que la conduite et travail en la guerre domine la force, dont ce siége peut estre nommé à droict la seconde Alexia et une grande restauration en partie de la vieille art et science militaire, laquelle a esté mocquée, voire n'a sceu éstre comprehendée, ou pour le moins practiquée des plus grands capitaines modernes; par où l'ennemi a ce coup plus perdu de sa réputation que reçu de dommage par les autres plusieurs belles et grandes victoires; tellement que si Messieurs les Etats seconderoient en forces ce que la guerre a augmenté en experience à bon droit, se pourroit on promettre une bonne et heureuse issue de laquelle je prie Dieu de faire à ce pauvre Pays Bas une fois jouir, et a votre Exce. l'honneur en recompense de ses genereux et he roicque desseings et grands travaulx de bientost triumpher."—Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives II. S. i. 245.

households would be tolerated, and there was no papal legate with fiery eloquence persuading a city full of heroic dupes that it was more virtuous for men or women to eat their own children than to forego one high mass, or to wink at a single conventicle.

After all, it was no such bitter hardship for the citizens of Gertruydenberg to participate in the prosperity of the rising and thriving young republic, and to enjoy those municipal and national liberties which her sister cities had found so sweet.

Nothing could be calmer or more reasonable than such a triumph, nothing less humiliating or less disastrous than such a surrender.

The problem was solved, the demonstration was made. To open their gates to the soldiers of the Union was not to admit the hordes of a Spanish commander with the avenging furies of murder, pillage, rape, which ever followed in their train over the breach of a captured city.

To an enemy hated or dreaded to the uttermost mortal capacity, that well-fortified and opulent city might have held out for months, and only when the arms and the fraud of the foe without, and of famine within, had done their work, could it have bowed its head to the conqueror, and submitted to the ineffable tortures which would be the necessary punishment of its courage.

Four thousand shots had been fired from the siege-guns upon the city, and three hundred upon the relieving force.

The besieging army numbered in all nine thousand one hundred and fifty men of all arms, and they lost during the eighty-five days' siege three hundred killed and four hundred wounded.[17]

After the conclusion of these operations, and the thorough remodelling of the municipal government of the important city thus regained to the republic, Maurice occupied himself with recruiting and refreshing his somewhat exhausted little army. On the other hand, old Count Mansfeld, dissatis-

[17] Duyck, 241. There were six hundred and fifty English and seven hundred German riders in Maurice's camp. The rest of his army were Netherlanders.

fied with the impotent conclusion to his attempts, retired to Brussels to be much taunted by the insolent Fuentes. He at least escaped very violent censure on the part of his son Charles, for that general, after his superfluous conquest of Noyon, while returning towards the Netherlands, far too tardily to succour Gertruydenberg, had been paralyzed in all his movements by a very extensive mutiny which broke out among the Spanish troops in the province of Artois.[18] The disorder went through all its regular forms. A town was taken, an Eletto was appointed. The country-side was black-mailed or plundered, and the rebellion lasted some thirteen months. Before it was concluded there was another similar outbreak among the Italians, together with the Walloons and other obedient Netherlanders in Hainault, who obliged the city of Mons to collect nine hundred florins a day for them.[19] The consequence of these military rebellions was to render the Spanish crown almost powerless during the whole year, within the provinces nominally subject to its sway. The cause—as always—was the non-payment of these veterans' wages, year after year. It was impossible for Philip, with all the wealth of the Indies and Mexico pouring through the Danaid sieve of the Holy League in France, to find the necessary funds to save the bronzed and war-worn instruments of his crimes in the Netherlands from starving and from revolt.

Meantime there was much desultory campaigning in Friesland. Verdugo and Frederic van den Berg picked up a few cities and strong places which had thrown off their allegiance to the king—Auerzyl, Schlochteren, Winschoten, Wedde, Ootmarzum—and invested the much more important town of Coeworden, which Maurice had so recently reduced to the authority of the Union. Verdugo's force was insufficient, however, and he had neither munitions nor provisions for a long siege. Winter was coming on; and the States, aware that he would soon be obliged to retire from before the well-garrisoned and fortified place, thought it unnecessary to interfere with him. After a very brief demon-

September, 1593.

[18] Meteren, xvi. 323. Coloma, vi. 123vo. Bor, III. 710. [19] Meteren, xvi. 323.

stration the Portuguese veteran was obliged to raise the siege.[20]

There were also certain vague attempts made by the enemy to re-possess himself of those most important seaports which had been pledged to the English queen. On a previous page the anxiety has been indicated with which Sir Robert Sydney regarded the withdrawal of the English troops in the Netherlands for the sake of assisting the French king. This palpable breach of the treaty had necessarily weakened England's hold on the affections of the Netherlanders, and awakened dark suspicions that treason might be impending at Flushing or Ostend. The suspicions were unjust—so far as the governors of those places were concerned—for Sydney and Norris were as loyal as they were intelligent and brave ; but the trust in their characters was not more implicit than it had been in that of Sir William Stanley before the commission of his crime. It was now believed that the enemy was preparing for a sudden assault upon Ostend with the connivance, it was feared, of a certain portion of the English garrison. The intelligence was at once conveyed to her Majesty's Government by Sir Edward Norris, and they determined to take a lesson from past experience. Norris was at once informed that in view of the attack which he apprehended, his garrison should be strengthened by five hundred men under Sir Conyers Clifford from certain companies in Flushing, and that other reinforcements should be sent from the English troops in Normandy. The governor was ordered to look well after his captains and soldiers, to remind them, in the queen's name, of their duty to herself and to the States, to bid all beware of sullying the English name, to make close investigations into any possible intrigues of the garrison with the enemy, and, should any culprits be found, to bring them at once to condign punishment.[21]

The queen, too, determined that there should be no blighting of English honour, if she could prevent it by her

[20] Bor, III. 714–718.

[21] The Queen's minute to Sir Edward Norris, partly in Burghley's hand, Oct. 1593. (S. P. Office MS.)

warnings, indited with her own hand a characteristic letter to Sir Edward Norris, to accompany the more formal despatch of Lord Burghley. Thus it ran :—

"Ned !—Though you have some tainted sheep among your flock, let not that serve for excuse for the rest. We trust you are so carefully regarded as nought shall be left for your excuses, but either ye lack heart or want will ; for of fear we will not make mention, as that our soul abhors, and we assure ourselves you will never discern suspicion of it. Now or never let for the honour of us and our nation, each man be so much of bolder heart as their cause is good, and their honour must be according, remembering the old goodness of our God, who never yet made us fail His needful help, who ever bless you as I with my prince's hand beseech Him." [22]

The warnings and preparations proved sufficiently effective, and the great schemes with which the new royal governor of the Netherlands was supposed to be full—a mere episode in which was the conquest of Ostend—seemed not so formidable as their shadows had indicated. There was, in the not very distant future, to be a siege of Ostend, which the world would not soon forget, but perhaps the place would not yield to a sudden assault. Its resistance, on the contrary, might prove more protracted than was then thought possible. But the chronicle of events must not be anticipated. For the present, Ostend was safe.[23]

Early in the following spring, Verdugo again appeared be-

[22] "A clause written in the letter to Sir Ed. Norris, with her Majesty's own hand." (S. P. Office MS.)

[23] "It appears by those advertisements that come unto me out of the land," wrote Sir Ed. Norris to Lord Burghley, "that the great expectation which was had of the coming of this new great governor is almost gone, who neither for peace nor war doth seem likely to perform that which he promised. . . . . It appears that his intention was by all means to settle those parts in some sort of peace, truce, or quiet by the taking of Ostend, whilst he might employ his whole forces upon greater enterprises. I think he is now out of hope of any, for he finds no likelihood of peace, and as for the taking of this place (Ostend), which the people flattered themselves so much withal, methinks the hope of it is delayed ; for the great works which were in hand at Newport and Bruges are laid aside, and all the workmen licensed to go home, but to be ready at a day's warning."—Norris to Burghley, 6 March, 1594. (S. P Office MS.)

fore Coeworden in force. It was obvious that the great city of Groningen, the mistress of all the north-eastern provinces, would soon be attacked, and Coeworden was the necessary base of any operations against the place. Fortunately for the States, William Lewis had in the preceding autumn occupied and fortified the only avenue through the Bourtange morass, so that when Verdugo sat down before Coeworden, it was possible for Maurice, by moving rapidly, to take the royal governor at a disadvantage.[24] April, 1594.

Verdugo had eight thousand picked troops, including two thousand Walloon cavalry, troopers who must have been very formidable, if they were to be judged by the prowess of one of their captains, Gaucier by name. This obedient Netherlander was in the habit of boasting that he had slain four hundred and ten men with his own hand, including several prisoners and three preachers ;[25] but the rest of those warriors were not so famed for their martial achievements.

The peril, however, was great, and Prince Maurice, trifling not a moment, threw himself with twelve thousand infantry, Germans, Frisians, Scotch, English, and Hollanders, and nearly two thousand horse, at once upon the road between the Vecht and the Bourtange morass. On the 6th of May, Verdugo found the States' commander-in-chief entrenched and impregnable, squarely established upon his line of communications. He reconnoitred, called a council of war, and decided that to assail him were madness ; to remain, destruction. On the night of the 6th of May, he broke up his camp and stole away in the darkness, without sound of drum or trumpet, leaving all his fortifications and burning all his huts.[26] 5 May. 6 May.

Thus had Maurice, after showing the world how strong places were to be reduced, given a striking exhibition of the manner in which they were to be saved.

Coeworden, after thirty-one weeks' investment, was relieved.

[24] Bor, III. 794–798. Meteren, xvi. 328–330.
[25] Meteren, Reyd, ix. 231. [26] Ibid.

The stadholder now marched upon Groningen. This city was one of the most splendid and opulent of all the Netherland towns. Certainly it should have been one of the most ancient in Europe, since it derived its name —according to that pains-taking banker, Francis Guicciardini—"from Grun, a Trojan gentleman," who, nevertheless, according to Munster, was "a Frenchman by birth." "Both theories, however, might be true," added the conscientious Florentine, "as the French have always claimed to be descended from the relics of Troy."[27] A simpler-minded antiquary might have babbled of green fields, since *groenighe*, or greenness, was a sufficiently natural appellation for a town surrounded as was Groningen on the east and west by the greenest and fattest of pastures. In population it was only exceeded by Antwerp and Amsterdam.[28] Situate on the line where upper and nether Germany blend into one, the capital of a great province whose very name was synonymous with liberty, and whose hardy sons had done fierce battle with despotism in every age, so long as there had been human record of despotism and of battles, Groningen had fallen into the hands of the foreign foe, not through the prowess of the Spaniard but the treason of the Netherlander. The baseness of the brilliant, trusted, valiant, treacherous young Renneberg has been recorded on a previous page of these volumes.[29] For thirteen years long the republic had chafed at this acquisition of the hated enemy within its very heart. And now the day had come when a blow should be struck for its deliverance by the ablest soldier that had ever shown himself in those regions, one whom the commonwealth had watched over from his cradle.

For in Groningen there was still a considerable party in favour of the Union, although the treason of Renneberg had hitherto prevented both city and province from incorporating themselves in the body politic of the United Netherlands.

[27] Guicciardini, *in voce*.

[28] Guicciardini, in 1585, says that no Netherland city exceeded it in population.

[29] Rise of the Dutch Republic, vol. iii. part vi. chap. iii.

Within the precincts were five hundred of Verdugo's veterans under George Lanckema, stationed at a faubourg called Schuytendiess.[30] In the city there was, properly speaking, no garrison,[31] for the citizens in the last few years had come to value themselves on their fidelity to church and king, and to take a sorry pride in being false to all that was noble in their past. Their ancestors had wrested privilege after privilege at the sword's point from the mailed hands of dukes and emperors, until they were almost a self-governing republic; their courts of justice recognizing no appeal to higher powers, even under the despotic sway of Charles V. And now, under the reign of his son, and in the feebler days of that reign, the capital of the free Frisians—the men whom their ancient pagan statutes had once declared to be "free so long as the wind blew out of the clouds"—relied upon the trained bands of her burghers enured to arms and well-provided with all munitions of war to protect her, not against foreign tyranny nor domestic sedition, but against liberty and against law.

For the representative of the most ancient of the princely houses of Europe, a youth whose ancestors had been emperors when the forefathers of Philip, long-descended as he was, were but country squires, was now knocking at their gates. Not as a conqueror and a despot, but as the elected first magistrate and commander-in-chief of the freest commonwealth in the world, Maurice of Nassau, at the head of fifteen thousand Netherlanders, countrymen of their own, now summoned the inhabitants of the town and province to participate with their fellow citizens in all the privileges and duties of the prosperous republic.

It seemed impossible that such an appeal could be resisted by force of arms. Rather it would seem that the very walls should have fallen at his feet at the first blast of the trumpet; but there was military honour, there was religious hatred, there was the obstinacy of party. More than all, there were half a dozen Jesuits within the town, and to those ablest of

[30] Meteren, xvi. 330, *seqq.* Bor, III. 808, *seqq.* [31] Ibid.

generals in times of civil war it was mainly owing that the siege of Groningen was protracted longer than under other circumstances would have been possible.[32]

20 May, 24 July, 1594.

It is not my purpose to describe in detail the scientific operations during the sixty-five days between the 20th May and the 24th July. Again the commander-in-chief enlightened the world by an exhibition of a more artistic and humane style of warfare than previously to his appearance on the military stage had been known. But the daily phenomena of the Leaguer—although they have been minutely preserved by most competent eye-witnesses—are hardly entitled to a place except in special military histories, where, however, they should claim the foremost rank.[33]

The fortifications of the city were of the most splendid and substantial character known to the age. The ditches, the ravelins, the curtains, the towers were as thoroughly constructed as the defences of any place in Europe. It was therefore necessary that Maurice and his cousin Lewis should employ all their learning, all their skill, and their best artillery to reduce this great capital of the Eastern Netherlands. Again the scientific coil of approaches wound itself around and around the doomed stronghold; again were constructed the galleries, the covered ways, the hidden mines, where soldiers, transformed to gnomes, burrowed and fought within the bowels of the earth; again that fatal letter Y advanced slowly under ground, stretching its deadly prongs nearer and nearer up to the walls; and again the system of defences against a relieving force was so perfectly established that Verdugo or Mansfeld, with what troops they could muster, seemed as powerless as the pewter soldiers with which Maurice in his boyhood—not yet so long passed away—was wont to puzzle over the problems which now practically engaged his early manhood. Again, too, strangely enough, it is recorded that Philip Nassau,

[32] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[33] See, in particular, Journal von Duyck, ed. Mulder, 394–465, in which every daily incident of the siege is minutely and scientifically recorded. Bor, III. 826–835. Meteren, xvi. 330, *seqq.*

at almost the same period of the siege as in that of Gertruydenberg, signalized himself by a deed of drunken and superfluous daring. This time the dinner party was at the quarters of Count Solms, in honour of the Prince of Anhalt, where, after potations pottle deep, Count Philip rushed from the dinner-table to the breach, not yet thoroughly practicable, of the north ravelin, and, entirely without armour, mounted pike in hand to the assault, proposing to carry the fort by his own unaided exertions. Another officer, one Captain Vaillant, still more beside himself than was the count, inspired him to these deeds of valour by assuring him that the mine was to be sprung under the ravelin that afternoon, and that it was a plot on the part of the Holland boatmen to prevent the soldiers who had been working so hard and so long in the mines from taking part in the honours of the assault. The count was with difficulty brought off with a whole skin and put to bed.[34] Yet despite these disgraceful pranks there is no doubt that a better and braver officer than he was hardly to be found even among the ten noble Nassaus who at that moment were fighting for the cause of Dutch liberty—fortunately with more sobriety than he at all times displayed. 11 July, 1594.

On the following day, Prince Maurice, making a reconnoissance of the works with his usual calmness, yet with the habitual contempt of personal danger which made so singular a contrast with the cautious and painstaking characteristics of his strategy, very narrowly escaped death. A shot from the fort struck so hard upon the buckler under cover of which he was taking his observations as to fell him to the ground.[35] Sir Francis Vere, who was with the prince under the same buckler, likewise measured his length in the trench, but both escaped serious injury.[36] Pauli, one of the States commissioners present in the camp, wrote to Barneveld that it was to be hoped that the accident might prove a warning to his Excellency. He had repeatedly remonstrated with him, he said, against his reckless exposure 12 July.

[34] Duyck, 448. Bor, III. 832. [35] Bor, *ubi sup.* Duyck, 448. Meteren, 330.
[36] Bor, *ubi sup.* But Duyck makes no mention of Vere in this connection.

of himself to unnecessary danger, but he was so energetic and so full of courage that it was impossible to restrain him from being everywhere every day.[37]

15 July, 1594. Three days later, the letter Y did its work. At ten o'clock of the night of the 15th July, Prince Maurice ordered the mines to be sprung, when the north ravelin was blown into the air, and some forty of the garrison with it.[38] Two of them came flying into the besiegers' camp, and, strange to say, one was alive and sound.[39] The catastrophe finished the sixty-five days' siege, the breach was no longer defensible, the obstinacy of the burghers was exhausted, and capitulation followed. In truth, there had been a subterranean intrigue going on for many weeks, which was almost as effective as the mine. A certain Jan te Boer had been going back and forth between camp and city, under various pretexts and safe-conducts, and it had at last appeared that the Jesuits and the five hundred of Verdugo's veterans were all that prevented Groningen from returning to the Union. There had been severe fighting within the city itself, for the Jesuits had procured the transfer of the veterans from the faubourg to the town itself, and the result of all these operations, political, military, and jesuitical, was that on 22nd July articles of surrender were finally agreed upon between Maurice and a deputation from the magistrates, the guilds, and commander Lanckema.[40]

22 July, 1594.

The city was to take its place thenceforth as a member of the Union. William Lewis, already stadholder of Friesland for the united States, was to be recognised as chief magistrate of the whole province, which was thus to retain all its ancient privileges, laws, and rights of self-government, while it exchanged its dependence on a distant, foreign, and decaying despotism for incorporation with a young and vigorous commonwealth.

It was arranged that no religion but the reformed religion, as then practised in the united republic, should be publicly

[37] Bor, *ubi sup.*
[38] Duyck, 452, 453. Bor. Meteren.
[39] Meteren, 330.
[40] Bor. Meteren. Duyck, 456–464.

exercised in the province, but that no man should be questioned as to his faith, or troubled in his conscience. Cloisters and ecclesiastical property were to remain *in statu quo*, until the States-General should come to a definite conclusion on these subjects.[41]

Universal amnesty was proclaimed for all offences and quarrels. Every citizen or resident foreigner was free to remain in or to retire from the town or province, with full protection to his person and property, and it was expressly provided in the articles granted to Lanckema that his soldiers should depart with arms and baggage, leaving to Prince Maurice their colours only, while the prince furnished sufficient transportation for their women and their wounded. The property of Verdugo, royal stadholder of the province, was to be respected, and to remain in the city, or to be taken thence under safe conduct, as might be preferred.[42]

[41] Art. VI. Meteren, 331. Bor, 835. The intelligence of the capture of Groningen excited great enthusiasm in the court of the French king, causing "the power of the States and the name of the prince to be extolled to heaven," according to Calvaert. "The entire suspension of Catholic worship, however, and the introduction of the reformed religion in the city, were reprehended by many. The king sensibly answered, said the envoy, that the townspeople had themselves been the cause of this, never having been willing to permit a church for the reformed faith. Now they were tripped up in the same way since they found themselves conquered. His Majesty added that your highnesses, when the Spaniards had been completely driven out of the country, would willingly re-open the Catholic churches in your provinces, if the others would do the same towards the reformed ones; asking me if it were not so. I answered yes, enlarging on the topic in such wise as I thought suited the occasion; and my language seemed to mitigate the said offence." Deventer, Gedenkstukken, ii. p. 32.

Here certainly seemed progress in the history of civilization. The French king and the republican envoy agreeing that Catholics and Protestants ought to have and were to have equal rights of public worship, showed an advance on the doctrine of Philip and of the German Protestant princes that the vassal was to have no opinion but his master's. Nevertheless the States-General were not pleased that their envoy should have answered the newly converted Henry so glibly on the great subject of protection to Catholics. He was asked by what authority he had given so categorical an answer, and he was directed in future to think twice, and ask for instructions in such emergencies. To promise public worship of a religion professed mainly in the Netherlands by the adherents of the Spanish king and the enemies of the States was pronounced altogether too rash. It was inferred from the eagerness manifested on this occasion, that the French king would be easily induced to make war on those of the reformed religion in case they were not willing to submit themselves to his discretion, and the Queen of England was perpetually intimating such a suspicion to the States. Duyck, 475.

[42] Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

Ten thousand cannon-shot had been fired against the city. The cost of powder and shot consumed was estimated at a hundred thousand florins. Four hundred of the besiegers had been killed, and a much larger number wounded. The army had been further weakened by sickness and numerous desertions. Of the besieged, three hundred soldiers in all were killed, and a few citizens.

Thirty-six cannon were taken, besides mortars, and it was said that eight hundred tons of powder, and plenty of other ammunition and provisions, were found in the place.[43]

On the 23rd July Maurice and William Lewis entered the city. Some of the soldiers were disappointed at the inexorable prohibition of pillage ; but it was the purpose of Maurice, as of the States-General, to place the sister province at once in the unsullied possession of the liberty and the order for which the struggle with Spain had been carried on so long. If the limitation of public religious worship seemed harsh, it should be remembered that Romanism in a city occupied by Spanish troops had come to mean unmitigated hostility to the republic. In the midst of civil war, the hour for that religious liberty which was the necessary issue of the great conflict had not yet struck. It was surely something gained for humanity that no man should be questioned at all as to his creed in countries where it was so recently the time-honoured practice to question him on the rack, and to burn him if the answer was objectionable to the inquirer.

It was something that the holy Inquisition had been for ever suppressed in the land. It must be admitted, likewise, that the terms of surrender and the spectacle of re-established law and order which succeeded the capture of Groningen furnished a wholesome contrast to the scenes of ineffable

[43] Duyck, 464, 465. Yet Coloma, vi. 133 and vo, ascribes the loss of the city mainly to two causes—*the want of powder*, and the flatteries and vile persuasions of the wives of the burghers, any one of which artful women was equal, he says, to three dissembling men. As in every part of the Netherlands, he adds, women exercise great influence, even in the most grave affairs, so there is no doubt that in Groningen they are, and have always been, more powerful than elsewhere.

horror that had been displayed whenever a Dutch town had fallen into the hands of Philip.

And thus the commonwealth of the United Netherlands, through the practical military genius and perseverance of Maurice and Lewis William, and the substantial statesmanship of Barneveld and his colleagues, had at last rounded itself into definite shape; while in all directions toward which men turned their eyes, world-empire, imposing and gorgeous as it had seemed for an interval, was vanishing before its votaries like a mirage. The republic, placed on the solid foundations of civil liberty, self-government, and reasonable law, was steadily consolidating itself.

No very prominent movements were undertaken by the forces of the Union during the remainder of the year. According to the agreements with Henry IV. it had been necessary to provide that monarch with considerable assistance to carry on his new campaigns, and it was therefore difficult for Maurice to begin for the moment upon the larger schemes which he had contemplated.

Meantime the condition of the obedient Netherlands demands a hasty glance.

On the death of brother Alexander the Capuchin, Fuentes produced a patent by which Peter Ernest Mansfeld was provisionally appointed governor, in case the post should become vacant. During the year which followed, that testy old campaigner had indulged himself in many petty feuds with all around him, but had effected, as we have seen, very little to maintain the king's authority either in the obedient or disobedient provinces.

His utter incompetency soon became most painfully apparent. His more than puerile dependence upon his son, and the more than paternal severity exercised over him by Count Charles, were made manifest to all the world. The son ruled the trembling but peevish old warrior with an iron rod, and endless was their wrangling with Fuentes and all the other Spaniards. Between the querulousness of the one and the ferocity of the other, poor Fuentes became sick of his life.

"'Tis a diabolical genius, this Count Charles," said Ybarra, "and so full of ambition that he insists on governing everybody just as he rules his father. As for me, until the archduke comes I am a fish out of water."[44]

The true successor to Farnese was to be the Archduke Ernest, one of the many candidates for the hand of the Infanta, and for the throne of that department of the Spanish dominions which was commonly called France. Should Philip not appropriate the throne without further scruple, in person, it was on the whole decided that his favorite nephew should be the satrap of that outlying district of the Spanish empire. In such case obedient France might be annexed to obedient Netherlands, and united under the sway of Archduke Ernest.

But these dreams had proved in the cold air of reality but midsummer madness. When the name of the archduke was presented to the estates as King Ernest I. of France, even the most unscrupulous and impassioned Leaguers of that country fairly hung their heads.[45] That a foreign prince, whose very name had never been before heard of by the vast bulk of the French population, should be deliberately placed upon the throne of St. Louis and Hugh Capet, was a humiliation hard to defend, profusely as Philip had scattered the Peruvian and Mexican dollars among the great ones of the nation, in order to accomplish his purpose.

So Archduke Ernest, early in the year 1594, came to Brussels, but he came as a gloomy, disappointed man. To be a bachelor-governor of the impoverished, exhausted, half-rebellious, and utterly forlorn little remnant of the Spanish Netherlands, was a different position from that of husband of Clara Isabella and king of France, on which his imagination had been feeding so long.

January, 1594.

For nearly the whole twelvemonth subsequent to the death

[44] Ybarra to the Secretaries, 5 Oct. 1593. (Arch de Simancas MS.)

[45] "Ils furent presque tous frappés d'horreur en considerant l'extremité ou etaient reduits les Français de penser choisir pour Roy un homme qu'ils ne scavaient seulement qu'il fust au monde."—Lettres de Bongars, 24 July, 1593, p. 235.

of Farnese, the Spanish envoy to the Imperial court had been endeavouring to arrange for the departure of the archduke to his seat of government in the Netherlands. The prince himself was willing enough, but there were many obstacles on the part of the emperor and his advisers. "Especially there is one very great impossibility," said San Clemente, "and that is the poverty of his Highness, which is so great that my own is not greater in my estate. So I don't see how he can stir a step without money. Here they'll not furnish him with a penny, and for himself he possesses nothing but debts." [46] The emperor was so little pleased with the adventure that in truth, according to the same authority, he looked upon the new viceroy's embarrassments with considerable satisfaction, so that it was necessary for Philip to provide for his travelling expenses.[47]

Ernest was next brother of the Emperor Rudolph, and as intensely devoted to the interests of the Roman Church as was that potentate himself, or even his uncle Philip.

He was gentle, weak, melancholy, addicted to pleasure, a martyr to the gout. He brought no soldiers to the provinces, for the emperor, threatened with another world-empire on his pagan flank, had no funds nor troops to send to the assistance of his Christian brother-in-law and uncle. Moreover, it may be imagined that Rudolph, despite the bonds of religion and consanguinity, was disposed to look coldly on the colossal projects of Philip.

So Ernest brought no troops, but he brought six hundred and seventy gentlemen, pages, and cooks, and five hundred and thirty-four horses, not to charge upon the rebellious Dutchmen withal, but to draw coaches and six.[48]

There was trouble enough prepared for the new governor at his arrival. The great Flemish and Walloon nobles were quarrelling fiercely with the Spaniards and among them-

[46] "Una imposibilidad muy grande es su pobreza que está de manera que no es mayor la mia en mi estado, y assi no sé yo como podra dar un passo sin dinero y de aqui no socorreren con un real, ni el tiene sino deudas."—G. de San Clemente to Fuentes, 14 March 1593. (Arch de Simancas MS.)

[47] San Clemente to Fuentes 2 May, 1593. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.) Same to same, 3 Aug. 1593. (Ibid.)

[48] Bor, III. 782. Reyd, ix. 220.

selves for office and for precedence. Arschot and his brother Havré both desired the government of Flanders; so did Arenberg. All three, as well as other gentlemen, were scrambling for the major-domo's office in Ernest's palace. Havré wanted the finance department as well, but Ybarra, who was a financier, thought the public funds in his hands would be in a perilous condition, inasmuch as he was accounted the most covetous man in all the provinces.[49]

So soon as the archduke was known to be approaching the capital there was a most ludicrous race run by all these grandees, in order to be the first to greet his Highness. While Mansfeld and Fuentes were squabbling, as usual, Arschot got the start of both, and arrived at Treves. Then the decrepit Peter Ernest struggled as far as Luxembourg, while Fuentes posted on to Namur.[50] The archduke was much perplexed as to the arranging of all these personages on the day of his entrance into Brussels. In the council of state it was still worse. Arschot claimed the first place as duke and as senior member, Peter Ernest demanded it as late governor-general and because of his grey hairs.[51] Never was imperial highness more disturbed, never was clamour for loaves and fishes more deafening. The caustic financier—whose mind was just then occupied with the graver matter of assassination on a considerable scale—looked with profound contempt at the spectacle thus presented to him. "There has been the devil's own row," said he, "between these counts about offices, and also about going out to receive the most serene archduke. I have had such work with them that by the salvation of my soul I swear if it were to last a fortnight longer I would go off afoot to Spain, even if I were sure of dying in jail after I got there. I have reconciled the two counts (Fuentes and Mansfeld) with each other a hundred times, and another hundred times they have fallen out again, and behaved themselves with such vulgarity that I blushed

[49] Ybarra to ——, 22 Nov. 1593. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)
[50] Papel sobre las precedencias. (Ibid.) [51] (Ibid.)

for them.[52] They are both to blame, but at any rate we have now got the archduke housed, and he will get us out of this embarrassment."

The archduke came with rather a prejudice against the Spaniards—the result doubtless of his disappointment in regard to France—and he manifested at first an extreme haughtiness to those of that nation with whom he came in contact. A Castilian noble of high rank, having audience with him on one occasion, replaced his hat after salutation, as he had been accustomed to do—according to the manner of grandees of Spain—during the government of Farnese. The hat was rudely struck from his head by the archduke's chamberlain, and he was himself ignominiously thrust out of the presence.[53] At another time an interview was granted to two Spanish gentlemen who had business to transact. They made their appearance in magnificent national costume, splendidly embroidered in gold. After a brief hearing they were dismissed, with appointment of another audience for a few days later. When they again presented themselves they found the archduke with his court-jester standing at his side, the buffoon being attired in a suit precisely similar to their own, which in the interval had been prepared by the court tailor.[54]

Such amenities as these did not increase the popularity of Ernest with the high-spirited Spaniards, nor was it palatable to them that it should be proposed to supersede the old fighting Portuguese, Verdugo, as governor and commander-in-chief for the king in Friesland, by Frederic van den Berg, a renegade Netherlander, unworthy cousin of the Nassaus, who had never shown either military or administrative genius.

Nor did he succeed in conciliating the Flemings or the

[52] "Ha pasado aqui una baraunda del diablo entre estos señores Condes sobre la reformacion y despues sobre el salir a recibir al Ser^mo^ Archiduque, y tanto trabajo mio, que por la salvacion de mi alma juro que si hubiera de durar esto 15 dias mas me fuera a pie a España aunque supiera morir en la carcel. Tuve los concertados cien vezes y otras ciento se han desconcertado y tratado por un termino tan vulgar que yo estoy corrido," &c. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[53] Reyd, ix. 222.

[54] Ibid.

Germans by these measures. In truth he was, almost without his own knowledge, under the controlling influence of Fuentes,[55] the most unscrupulous and dangerous Spaniard of them all, while his every proceeding was closely watched not only by Diego and Stephen Ybarra, but even by Christoval de Moura, one of Philip's two secretaries of state who at this crisis made a visit to Brussels.[56]

These men were indignant at the imbecility of the course pursued in the obedient provinces. They knew that the incapacity of the Government to relieve the sieges of Gertruydenberg and Groningen had excited the contempt of Europe, and was producing a most damaging effect on Spanish authority throughout Christendom.[57] They were especially irritated by the presence of the arch-intriguer, Mayenne, in Brussels, even after all his double dealings had been so completely exposed that a blind man could have read them. Yet there was Mayenne, consorting with the archduke, and running up a great bill of sixteen thousand florins at the hotel, which the royal paymaster declined to settle for want of funds, notwithstanding Ernest's order to that effect,[58] and there was no possibility of inducing the viceroy to arrest him, much as he had injured and defrauded the king.

How severely Ybarra and Feria denounced Mayenne has been seen; but remonstrances about this and other grave mistakes of administration were lost upon Ernest, or made almost impossible by his peculiar temper. "If I speak of these things to his Highness," said Ybarra, "he will begin to cry, as he always does." [59]

[55] Fuentes was not a favourite with Queen Elizabeth. When informed that he was to succeed to the government of the provinces after the death of Parma, she remarked to Noel de Caron that it was the same Count Fuentes who had so shamefully run away when Earl Essex and her people were before Lisbon, that he was a timid old woman, but none the less a great tyrant, and that therefore he had been sent, after the death of the Duke of Alva, to Portugal, and appointed lieutenant-general of the Cardinal of Austria, in order to carry out what had been left unfinished by the duke. She doubted not, she said, that he would attempt the same practices in the Netherlands, but she hoped that a Spanish governor would never be tolerated there." Noel de Caron to the States-General, 10 Dec. 1592. (Hague Archives MS.) Compare Duyck, 465.

[56] Intercepted letters of San Clemente, in Bor, III. 852–855.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Reyd, ix. 243.

[59] Ibid. 242.

Ybarra, however, thought it his duty secretly to give the king frequent information as to the blasted and forlorn condition of the provinces. "This sick man will die in our arms," he said, "without our wishing to kill him." [60] He also left no doubt in the royal mind as to the utter incompetency of the archduke for his office. Although he had much Christianity, amiability, and good intentions, he was so unused to business, so slow and so lazy, so easily persuaded by those around him, as to be always falling into errors. He was the servant of his own servants, particularly of those least disposed to the king's service and most attentive to their own interests. He had endeavoured to make himself beloved by the natives of the country, while the very reverse of this had been the result. "As to his agility and the strength of his body," said the Spaniard, as if he were thinking of certain allegories which were to mark the archduke's triumphal entry, "they are so deficient as to leave him unfit for arms. I consider him incapable of accompanying an army to the field, and we find him so new to all such affairs as constitute government and the conduct of warlike business, that he could not steer his way without some one to enlighten and direct him." [61]

It was sometimes complained of in those days—and the thought has even prolonged itself until later times—that those republicans of the United Netherlands had done and could do great things; but that, after all, there was no grandeur about them. Certainly they had done great things. It was something to fight the Ocean for ages, and patiently and firmly to shut him out from his own domain. It was something to extinguish the Spanish Inquisition—a still more cruel and devouring enemy than the sea. It was something that the fugitive spirit of civil and religious liberty had found at last its most substantial and steadfast home upon those storm-washed shoals and shifting sandbanks.

[60] Ybarra to Philip, 21 June, 1594. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) "La enfermedad de esto cuerpo es muy aparejado para que se le muera en los brazos sin quererle matar," &c

[61] Ibid.

It was something to come to the rescue of England in her great agony and help to save her from invasion. It was something to do more than any nation but England, and as much as she, to assist Henry the Huguenot to the throne of his ancestors and to preserve the national unity of France which its own great ones had imperilled. It was something to found two magnificent universities, cherished abodes of science and of antique lore, in the midst of civil commotions and of resistance to foreign oppression. It was something, at the same period, to lay the foundation of a system of common schools—so cheap as to be nearly free—for rich and poor alike, which, in the words of one of the greatest benefactors to the young republic, "would be worth all the soldiers, arsenals, armouries, munitions, and alliances in the world." It was something to make a revolution, as humane as it was effective, in military affairs, and to create an army whose camps were European academies. It was something to organize, at the same critical period, on the most skilful and liberal scale, and to carry out with unexampled daring, sagacity, and fortitude, great voyages of discovery to the polar regions, and to open new highways for commerce, new treasures for science. Many things of this nature had been done by the new commonwealth; but, alas! she did not drape herself melodramatically, nor stalk about with heroic wreath and cothurn. She was altogether without grandeur.

When Alva had gained his signal victories, and followed them up by those prodigious massacres which, but for his own and other irrefragable testimony, would seem too monstrous for belief, he had erected a colossal statue to himself, attired in the most classical of costumes, and surrounded with the most mythological of attributes. Here was grandeur. But William the Silent, after he had saved the republic, for which he had laboured during his whole lifetime and was destined to pour out his heart's blood, went about among the brewers and burghers with unbuttoned doublet and woollen bargeman's waistcoat. It was justly objected to

his clothes, by the euphuistic Fulke Greville, that a mean-born student of the Inns of Court would have been ashamed to walk about London streets in them.[62]

And now the engineering son of that shabbily-dressed personage had been giving the whole world lessons in the science of war, and was fairly perfecting the work which William and his great contemporaries had so well begun. But if all this had been merely doing great things without greatness, there was one man in the Netherlands who knew what grandeur was. He was not a citizen of the disobedient republic, however, but a loyal subject of the obedient provinces, and his name was John Baptist Houwaerts, an eminent schoolmaster of Brussels. He was still more eminent as a votary of what was called "Rhetoric" and as an arranger of triumphal processions and living pictures.

The arrival of Archduke Ernest at the seat of the provincial Government offered an opportunity, which had long been wanting, for a display of John Baptist's genius. The new viceroy was in so shattered a condition of health, so crippled with the gout, as to be quite unable to stand, and it required the services of several lackeys to lift him into and out of his carriage.[63] A few days of repose therefore were indispensable to him before he could make his "joyous entrance" into the capital. But the day came at last, and the exhibition was a masterpiece.

It might have seemed that the abject condition of the Spanish provinces—desolate, mendicant, despairing—would render holiday making impossible. But although almost every vestige of the ancient institutions had vanished from the obedient Netherlands as a reward for their obedience; although to civil and religious liberty, law, order, and a thriving commercial and manufacturing existence, such as had been rarely witnessed in the world, had succeeded the absolute tyranny of Jesuits, universal beggary, and a perennial military mutiny—setting Government at defiance and

[62] Vol. I. of this work, p. 371. Brooke's Sidney, 16, *seqq.*
[63] Reyd, ix. 220–222. Bor, III. 782.

plundering the people—there was one faithful comforter who never deserted Belgica, and that was Rhetoric.

Neither the magnificence nor the pedantry of the spectacles by which the entry of the mild and inefficient Ernest into Brussels and Antwerp was now solemnized had ever been surpassed. The town councils, stimulated by hopes absolutely without foundation as to great results to follow the advent of the emperor's brother, had voted large sums and consumed many days in anxious deliberation upon the manner in which they should be expended so as most to redound to the honour of Ernest and the reputation of the country.

In place of the "bloody tragedies of burning, murdering, and ravishing," of which the provinces had so long been the theatre, it was resolved that "Rhetoric's sweet comedies, amorous jests, and farces," should gladden all eyes and hearts.[64] A stately procession of knights and burghers in historical and mythological costumes, followed by ships, dromedaries, elephants, whales, giants, dragons, and other wonders of the sea and shore, escorted the archduke into the city. Every street and square was filled with triumphal arches, statues and platforms, on which the most ingenious and thoroughly classical living pictures were exhibited. There was hardly an eminent deity of Olympus, or hero of ancient history, that was not revived and made visible to mortal eyes in the person of Ernestus of Austria.

On a framework fifty-five feet high and thirty-three feet in breadth he was represented as Apollo hurling his darts at an enormous Python, under one of whose fore-paws struggled an unfortunate burgher, while the other clutched a whole city; Tellus, meantime, with her tower on her head, kneeling anxious and imploring at the feet of her deliverer. On another stage Ernest assumed the shape of Perseus; Belgica that of the bound and despairing Andromeda. On a third,

[64] Descriptio et Explicatio pegmatorum et spectaculorum quæ Bruxellæ exhibita fuere sub ingressum Seremi principis Ernesti, &c. Bruxellæ, 1593 (S. V.) Houwaert's Moralisatie op de Komst van de hooghgeboren, machtigen en seer doorlugtigen Vorst Ernesto, &c. Bruessel, by Jan Mommaert, 1594.

the interior of Etna was revealed, when Vulcan was seen urging his Cyclops to forge for Ernest their most tremendous thunderbolts with which to smite the foes of the provinces, those enemies being of course the English and the Hollanders. Venus, the while, timidly presented an arrow to her husband, which he was requested to sharpen, in order that when the wars were over Cupid therewith might pierce the heart of some beautiful virgin, whose charms should reward Ernest—fortunately for the female world, still a bachelor—for his victories and his toils.[65]

The walls of every house were hung with classic emblems and inscribed with Latin verses. All the pedagogues of Brussels and Antwerp had been at work for months, determined to amaze the world with their dithyrambics and acrostics, and they had outdone themselves.

Moreover, in addition to all these theatrical spectacles and pompous processions—accompanied as they were by blazing tar-barrels, flying dragons, and leagues of flaring torches—John Baptist, who had been director-in-chief of all the shows successively arranged to welcome Don John of Austria, Archduke Matthias, Francis of Alençon, and even William of Orange, into the capital, had prepared a feast of a specially intellectual character for the new governor-general.

The pedant, according to his own account, so soon as the approach of Ernest had been announced, fell straightway into a trance.[66] While he was in that condition, a beautiful female apparition floated before his eyes, and, on being questioned, announced her name to be Moralization. John Baptist begged her to inform him whether it were true, as had been stated, that Jupiter had just sent Mercury to the Netherlands. The phantom, correcting his mistake, observed that the king of gods and men had not sent Hermes but the Archduke Ernestus, beloved of the three Graces, favourite of the nine Muses, and, in addition to these advantages, nephew and brother-in-law of the King of Spain, to the relief of the suffering provinces. The Netherlands, it was true, for their

[65] Houwaert's Moralisatie, &c., *ubi sup.* [66] Ibid.

religious infidelity, had justly incurred great disasters and misery; but benignant Jove, who, to the imagination of this excited Fleming, seemed to have been converted to Catholicism while still governing the universe, had now sent them in mercy a deliverer. The archduke would speedily relieve "bleeding Belgica" from her sufferings, bind up her wounds, and annihilate her enemies. The spirit further informed the poet that the forests of the Low Countries—so long infested by brigands, wood-beggars, and malefactors of all kinds—would thenceforth swarm with "nymphs, rabbits, hares, and animals of that nature." [67]

A vision of the conquering Ernest, attended by "eight-and-twenty noble and pleasant females, marching two and two, half naked, each holding a torch in one hand and a laurel-wreath in the other," now swept before the dreamer's eyes.[68] He naturally requested the "discreet spirit" to mention the names of this bevy of imperfectly attired ladies thronging so lovingly around the fortunate archduke, and was told that "they were the eight-and-twenty virtues which chiefly characterized his serene Highness." [69] Prominent in this long list, and they were all faithfully enumerated, were Philosophy, Audacity, Acrimony, Virility, Equity, Piety, Velocity, and Alacrity.[70] The two last-mentioned qualities could hardly be attributed to the archduke in his decrepit condition, except in an intensely mythological sense. Certainly, they would have been highly useful virtues to him at that moment. The prince who had just taken Gertruydenberg,

[67] "In plaetse dat de bosschen plachten te sijne
Vol knevelaers en roovers in alle quartieren
Soo waren sy wederom ten selven termijne
Vol Nymphen, hasen, conijnen en ghelijcke
Dieren."

Houwaert's Moralisatie, &c.

[68] Ibid.

[69] "Acht en twintig edel Nymphen playsant
Sach ich voor den prince haer vertoonen
. . . . . .
Toen spraeck ick, O Vrindinne, wilt my
noch bedien
De namen van die nymphen weirt gehonoreert,
Die ick voort, by, en achter Ernestum
gesien,
En warom dat sy hem hebben geconvoyeert?
Drom de Nymphe heeft gerespondeert
De agt en twintig Nymphen die met
vreughden
Twee en twee tegader hebben gemarscheert
Dat sijn des doolugtigen Princen deughden." &c.

Ibid.

[70] "En i dese deughtlijcke Nymphen dit sijn
genaempt
Philosophia en Intelligentia
Audacia en Magnanimitas unbeschaempt
Acrimonia en Virilitas
Securitas en Clementia
Firmitudo en Velocitas
Alacritas en Pietatis abundantia
Potentia en Opportunitas gheheesen." &c.

Ibid.

and was then besieging Groningen, was manifesting his share of audacity, velocity, and other good gifts on even a wider platform than that erected for Ernest by John Baptist Houwaerts; and there was an admirable opportunity for both to develope their respective characteristics for the world's judgment.

Meantime the impersonation of the gentle and very gouty invalid as Apollo, as Perseus, as the feather-heeled Mercury, was highly applauded by the burghers of Brussels.

And so the dreamer dreamed on, and the discreet nymph continued to discourse, until John Baptist, starting suddenly from his trance beheld that it was all a truth and no vision. Ernest was really about to enter the Netherlands, and with him the millennium. The pedant therefore proceeded to his desk, and straightway composed the very worst poem that had ever been written in any language, even Flemish.

There were thousands of lines in it, and not a line without a god or a goddess.

Mars, Nemesis, and Ate, Pluto, Rhadamanthus, and Minos, the Fates and the Furies, together with Charon, Calumnia, Bellona, and all such objectionable divinities, were requested to disappear for ever from the Low Countries; while in their stead were confidently invoked Jupiter, Apollo, Triptolemus, and last, though not least, Rhetorica.[71]

Enough has been said of this raree-show to weary the reader's patience, but not more than enough to show the docile and enervated nature of this portion of a people who had lost everything for which men cherish their fatherland, but who could still find relief—after thirty years of horrible civil war—in painted pageantry, Latin versification, and the classical dictionary.

Yet there was nothing much more important achieved by the archduke in the brief period for which his administration was destined to endure. Three phenomena chiefly marked his reign, but his own part in the three was rather a passive than an active one—mutiny, assassination, and

[71] Houwaert's Moralsatie, &c.

negotiation—the two last attempted on a considerable scale but ending abortively.

It is impossible to exaggerate the misery of the obedient provinces at this epoch. The insane attempt of the King of Spain, with such utterly inadequate machinery, to conquer the world has been sufficiently dilated upon. The Spanish and Italian and Walloon soldiers were starving in Brabant and Flanders in order that Spanish gold might be poured into the bottomless pit of the Holy League in France.[72]

The mutiny that had broken forth the preceding year in Artois and Hainault was now continued on a vast scale in Brabant. Never had that national institution—a Spanish

[72] It is instructive to know the exact sums of money regularly expended by the King of Spain each month, at this period, in France and the Netherlands.

In Flanders and Friesland was an army of	23,952	men, costing per month		$206,431
The army of France was estimated at	18,921	„	„	175,370
Total	42,873			
Certain individuals, very few in number, maintained in France*		„	„	42,360
Besides the above, all supplied from Spain, there were maintained by contributions, aids, and licenses in the provinces	6,715	„	„	38,239
Expenses of navy		„	„	10,958
Total per month				$473,358

Relacion de lo que monta la paga de los exercitos que su Mag^d^. entretiene en Flandes, Brabante, Frisia, y Francia, 1593. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

By another paper it appears at this time there were serving the King of Spain in France and the Netherlands—

German infantry—Soldiers	14,994	
Officers	1,298	
	16,292	
Italian infantry—Soldiers	3,397	
Officers	423	
	3,820	

(Arch. de Simancas, Anno 1594, MS.)

* These favoured personages were—

Duke of Mayenne	per month,	$12,000
Duke of Guise	„	6,000
Balagny	„	7,200
Duke of Aumale	„	1,800
M. de Rosne	„	1,800
M. de St. Pol and his cavalry	„	9,960
Certain gentlemen in Picardy	„	2,400
Governor of La Fere	„	1,200
		$42,360

mutiny—been more thoroughly organized, more completely carried out in all its details. All that was left of the famous Spanish discipline and military science in this their period of rapid decay, seemed monopolized by the mutineers. Some two thousand choice troops (horse and foot), Italians and Spanish, took possession of two considerable cities, Sichem and Arschot, and ultimately concentrated themselves at Sichem, which they thoroughly fortified. Having chosen their Eletto and other officers they proceeded regularly to business. To the rallying point came disaffected troops of all nations from far and near. Never since the beginning of the great war had there been so extensive a military rebellion, nor one in which so many veteran officers, colonels, captains, and subalterns took part. The army of Philip had at last grown more dangerous to himself than to the Hollanders.

The council at Brussels deliberated anxiously upon the course to be pursued, and it was decided at last to negotiate with instead of attacking them. But it was soon found that the mutineers were as hard to deal with as were the republicans on the other side the border. They refused to hear of anything short of complete payment of the enormous arrears due to them, with thorough guarantees and hostages that any agreement made between themselves and the archduke should be punctually carried out. Meanwhile they ravaged the country far and near, and levied their contributions on towns and villages, up to the very walls of Brussels, and before the very eyes of the viceroy.

Moreover they entered into negotiation with Prince Maurice of Nassau, not offering to enlist under his flag, but asking for protection against the king in exchange for a pledge meanwhile not to serve his cause. At last the archduke plucked up a heart and sent some troops against the rebels, who had constructed two forts on the river Demer near the city of Sichem. In vain Velasco, commander of the expedition, endeavoured to cut off the supplies for these redoubts. The vigour and audacity of the rebel cavalry made the process

impossible. Velasco then attempted to storm the lesser stronghold of the two, but was repulsed with the loss of two hundred killed. Among these were many officers, one of whom, Captain Porto Carrero, was a near relative of Fuentes. After a siege, Velasco, who was a marshal of the camp of considerable distinction, succeeded in driving the mutineers out of the forts; who, finding their position thus weakened, renewed their negotiations with Maurice. They at last obtained permission from the prince to remain under the protection of Gertruydenberg and Breda until they could ascertain what decision the archduke would take. More they did not ask of Maurice, nor did he require more of them.

The mutiny, thus described in a few lines, had occupied nearly a year, and had done much to paralyze for that period all the royal operations in the Netherlands. In December the rebellious troops marched out of Sichem in perfect order, and came to Langstraet within the territory of the republic.[73]

December, 1594.

The archduke now finding himself fairly obliged to treat with them sent an offer of the same terms which had been proposed to mutineers on previous occasions. At first they flatly refused to negotiate at all, but at last, with the permission of Maurice, who conducted himself throughout with scrupulous delicacy, and made no attempts to induce them to violate their allegiance to the king, they received Count Belgioso, the envoy of the archduke. They held out for payment of all their arrears up to the last farthing, and insisted on a hostage of rank until the debt should be discharged. Full forgiveness of their rebellious proceedings was added as a matter of course. Their terms were accepted, and Francisco Padiglia was assigned as a hostage. They then established themselves, according to agreement, at Tirlemont, which they were allowed to fortify at the expense of the province and to hold until the money for their back wages could be scraped together. Meantime they received daily wages and rations

[73] Bentivoglio, P. III. lib. i. 399, 400. Meteren, 340, 341. Coloma, vii. 150vo, *seqq.*

from the Government at Brussels, including thirty stivers a day for each horseman, thirteen crowns a day for the Eletto, and ten crowns a day for each counsellor, making in all five hundred crowns a day. And here they remained, living exceedingly at their ease and enjoying a life of leisure for eighteen months, and until long after the death of the archduke, for it was not until the administration of Cardinal Albert that the funds, amounting to three hundred and sixty thousand crowns, could be collected.[74]

These were the chief military exploits of the podagric Perseus in behalf of the Flemish Andromeda.

A very daring adventure was however proposed to the archduke. Philip calmly suggested that an expedition should be rapidly fitted out in Dunkirk, which should cross the channel, ascend the Thames as far as Rochester, and burn the English fleet. "I am informed by persons well acquainted with the English coast," said the king, "that it would be an easy matter for a few quick-sailing vessels to accomplish this. Two or three thousand soldiers might be landed at Rochester who might burn or sink all the unarmed vessels they could find there, and the expedition could return and sail off again before the people of the country could collect in sufficient numbers to do them any damage." The archduke was instructed to consult with Fuentes and Ybarra as to whether this little matter, thus parenthetically indicated, could be accomplished without too much risk and trouble.[75]

Certainly it would seem as if the king believed in the audacity, virility, velocity, alacrity, and the rest of the twenty-eight virtues of his governor-general, even more seriously than did John Baptist Houwaerts. The unfortunate archduke would have needed to be, in all earnestness, a mythological demigod to do the work required of him. With the best part of his army formally maintained by him in recognised mutiny, with the great cities of the Netherlands yielding themselves to the republic with hardly an attempt on the

[74] Bentivoglio, et al., *ubi sup.*
[75] Philip to Ernest, 19 Feb. 1594. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

part of the royal forces to relieve them, and with the country which he was supposed to govern, the very centre of the obedient provinces, ruined, sacked, eaten up by the soldiers of Spain ; villages, farmhouses, gentlemen's castles, churches plundered ; the male population exposed to daily butchery, and the women to outrages worse than death ;[76] it seemed like the bitterest irony to propose that he should seize that moment to outwit the English and Dutch sea-kings who were perpetually cruising in the channel, and to undertake a "beard-singeing" expedition such as even the dare-devil Drake would hardly have attempted.

Such madcap experiments might perhaps one day, in the distant future, be tried with reasonable success, but hardly at the beck of a Spanish king sitting in his easy chair a thousand miles off, nor indeed by the servants of any king whatever.

The plots of murder arranged in Brussels during this administration were on a far more extensive scale than were the military plans.

The Count of Fuentes, general superintendant of foreign affairs, was especially charged with the department of assassination. This office was no sinecure; for it involved much correspondence, and required great personal attention to minute details. Philip, a consummate artist in this branch of industry, had laid out a good deal of such work which he thought could best be carried out in and from the Netherlands. Especially it was desirable to take off, by poison or

[76] Such pictures are painted not only by republican contemporaries, but by the governors and grandees of the obedient provinces. "Como va arruinado," wrote the royal governor of Hainault, Prince Chimay, to the king, "comido, saqueado, saquearan las aldeas, casas de gentiles hombres y iglesias, se matan los hombres, se desvirgen las mozas y mugeres y otros mil maldades que se cometen cada dia a mi pesar y sin que de ellas se ha hecho alguna justicia aunque me soy quejado y lamentado muchas veces."—Chimay to Philip, 17 March, 1574. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

"As to getting a good deal of money out of the provinces here by gentleness and persuasion, according to your Majesty's suggestion," wrote the archduke, "your Majesty must be undeceived. Nothing can be got from the provinces, because the whole patrimony thereof is consumed, the private fortunes are destroyed, and everything is in such a brittle condition that nothing whatever can be undertaken in these regions."—Instruccion que el Archque Ernesto dio al Bon Max Dietrichstein, 12 April, 1594. (Ibid.)

otherwise, Henry IV., Queen Elizabeth, Maurice of Nassau, Olden-Barneveld, St. Aldegonde, and other less conspicuous personages.

Henry's physician-in-chief, De la Riviere, was at that time mainly occupied with devising antidotes to poison, which he well knew was offered to his master on frequent occasions, and in the most insidious ways. Andrada, the famous Portuguese poisoner, amongst others is said, under direction of Fuentes and Ybarra, to have attempted his life by a nosegay of roses impregnated with so subtle a powder that its smell alone was relied upon to cause death,[77] and De la Riviere was doing his best to search for a famous Saxon drug, called fable-powder, as a counter-poison. "The Turk alarms us, and well he may," said a diplomatic agent of Henry, "but the Spaniard allows us not to think of the Turk. And what a strange manner is this to exercise one's enmities and vengeance by having recourse to such damnable artifices, after force and arms have not succeeded, and to attack the person of princes by poisonings and assassinations."[78]

A most elaborate attempt upon the life of Queen Elizabeth early in this year came near being successful. A certain Portuguese Jew, Dr. Lopez, had for some time been her physician-in-ordinary. He had first been received into her service on the recommendation of Don Antonio, the pretender, and had the reputation of great learning and skill. With this man Count Fuentes and Stephen Ybarra, chief of the financial department at Brussels, had a secret understanding. Their chief agent was Emanuel Andrada, who was also in close communication with Bernardino de Mendoza and other leading personages of the Spanish court. Two years previously, Philip, by the hands of Andrada, had sent a very valuable ring of rubies and diamonds as a present to Lopez, and the doctor had bound himself to do any service for the King of Spain that might be required of him. Andrada accordingly wrote to Mendoza that he had gained over this eminent physician, but that as Lopez was poor and laden with

[77] Meteren, xvi. 334.

[78] Bongar's Lettres, p. 271.

debt, a high price would be required for his work. Hereupon Fuentes received orders from the King of Spain to give the Jew all that he could in reason demand, if he would undertake to poison the queen.[79]

It now became necessary to handle the matter with great delicacy, and Fuentes and Ybarra entered accordingly into a correspondence, not with Lopez, but with a certain Ferrara de Gama. These letters were entrusted to one Emanuel Lewis de Tinoco, secretly informed of the plot, for delivery to Ferrara. Fuentes charged Tinoco to cause Ferrara to encourage Lopez to poison her Majesty of England, that they might all have "a merry Easter."[80] Lopez was likewise requested to inform the King of Spain when he thought he could accomplish the task. The doctor ultimately agreed to do the deed for fifty thousand crowns, but as he had daughters and was an affectionate parent, he stipulated for a handsome provision in marriage for those young ladies.[81] The terms were accepted, but Lopez wished to be assured of the money first.

"Having once undertaken the work," said Lord Burghley, if he it were, "he was so greedy to perform it that he would ask Ferrara every day, 'When will the money come? I am ready to do the service if the answer were come out of Spain.'"[82]

But Philip, as has been often seen, was on principle averse to paying for work before it had been done. Some delay occurring, and the secret, thus confided to so many, having floated as it were imperceptibly into the air, Tinoco was arrested on suspicion before he had been able to deliver the letters of Fuentes and Ybarra to Ferrara, for Ferrara, too, had been imprisoned before the arrival of Tinoco. The whole correspondence was discovered, and both Ferrara and Tinoco confessed the plot. Lopez, when first arrested, denied his

[79] Account of Dr. Lopez's treason—doubtless by Lord Burghley—in Murdin's State Papers, ii. 669–675. Meteren, xvi. 334, *segg.* Reyd, ix. 247, 248.

[80] Account of Dr. Lopez's treason, &c.

[81] "And further to set him on, he was to be put in mind that he had daughters to marry, for whom the king would provide, and what great honours and rewards he should have."—Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

guilt very stoutly, but being confronted with Ferrara, who told the whole story to his face in presence of the judges, he at last avowed the crime.[83]

They were all condemned, executed, and quartered at London in the spring of 1594. The queen wished to send a special envoy to the archduke at Brussels, to complain that Secretary of State Cristoval de Moura, Count Fuentes, and Finance Minister Ybarra—all three then immediately about his person—were thus implicated in the plot against her life, to demand their punishment, or else, in case of refusal, to convict the king and the archduke as accomplices in the crime.[84] Safe conduct was requested for such an envoy, which was refused by Ernest as an insulting proposition both to his uncle and himself. The queen accordingly sent word to President Richardot by one of her council, that the whole story would be published, and this was accordingly done.[85]

Early in the spring of this same year, a certain Renichon, priest and schoolmaster of Namur, was summoned from his school to a private interview with Count Berlaymont. That nobleman very secretly informed the priest that the King of Spain wished to make use of him in an affair of great importance, and one which would be very profitable to himself. The pair then went together to Brussels, and proceeded

[83] Account of Dr. Lopez's treason. Meteren, Reyd, *ubi sup.* [84] Reyd, 248.

[85] Ibid. "But because by fame and hearsay," says the writer of the account, no doubt Lord Burghley, "things take not always a true report, and I know the quality of those treasons are of the sort so heinous as all sorts of men desire to be truly informed of the same, I have set down a plain and short declaration of the treason of this perjured murthering traitor, without alleging proofs, which may be done hereafter at large, ... and also that the practices were set at work, as manifestly appeared to authentical proof, by him who either in respect of his calling or of her Majesty's deserving, should least of all others have consented to so unprincely an act. Yet it is a strange thing to consider, that in so evident a matter, touching as virtuous and sovereign a princess as ever the world did enjoy, we are loath, in reverend regard of the name and title of royal and supreme dignity, *to have him named, otherwise than cannot be avoided in the simple narration of the cause,* and indeed, if I may utter my conceit, *a greater indignity nor breach of honour never was given to that high degree, violated by the hands of him who should chiefly sustain that calling.* I leave him to the judgment of God, King of kings, who taketh account of their doings. . . . What may be thought of them who use so high, so holy, so reverent a thing (the profession of religion) to cloke ambition, revenge, and wicked practices? Truly the age wherein we are born shall endure hereafter note of reproach for this kind of impiety and profanation." Most truly, O Lord High Treasurer!

straightway to the palace. They were secretly admitted to the apartments of the archduke, but the priest, meaning to follow his conductor into the private chamber, where he pretended to recognize the person of Ernest, was refused admittance. The door was, however, not entirely closed, and he heard, as he declared, the conversation between his Highness and Berlaymont, which was carried on partly in Latin and partly in Spanish. He heard them discussing the question—so he stated—of the recompense to be awarded for the business about to be undertaken, and after a brief conversation, distinctly understood the archduke to say, as the count was approaching the door, "I will satisfy him abundantly and with interest."[86]

Berlaymont then invited his clerical guest to supper—so ran his statement—and, after that repast was finished, informed him that he was requested by the archduke to kill Prince Maurice of Nassau. For this piece of work he was to receive one hundred Philip-dollars in hand, and fifteen thousand more, which were lying ready for him, so soon as the deed should be done.

The schoolmaster at first objected to the enterprise, but ultimately yielded to the persuasions of the count. He was informed that Maurice was a friendly, familiar gentleman, and that there would be opportunities enough for carrying out the project if he took his time. He was to buy a good pair of pistols and remove to the Hague, where he was to set up a school, and wait for the arrival of his accomplices, of whom there were six. Berlaymont then caused to be summoned and introduced to the pedagogue a man whom he described as one of the six. The new comer, hearing that Renichon had agreed to the propositions made to him, hailed him cordially as comrade and promised to follow him very soon into Holland. Berlaymont then observed that there were several personages to be made away with, besides Prince Maurice—especially Barneveld and St. Aldegonde—

[86] Bor, III. 815, 817. Reyd, ix. 223–228. Meteren, xvi. 335. "Cumulate et largo foenore satisfaciam."

and that the six assassins had, since the time of the Duke of Parma, been kept in the pay of the King of Spain as nobles, to be employed as occasion should serve.

His new comrade accompanied Renichon to the canal boat, conversing by the way, and informed him that they were both to be sent to Leyden in order to entice away and murder the young brother of Maurice, Frederic Henry, then at school at that place, even as Philip William, eldest of all the brothers, had been kidnapped five-and-twenty years before from the same town.

Renichon then disguised himself as a soldier, proceeded to Antwerp, where he called himself Michaël de Triviere, and thence made his way to Breda, provided with letters from Berlaymont. He was, however, arrested on suspicion not long after his arrival there, and upon trial the whole plot was discovered. Having unsuccessfully attempted to hang himself, he subsequently, without torture, made a full and minute confession, and was executed on the 3rd June, 1594.[87]

Later in the year, one Pierre du Four, who had been a soldier both in the States and the French service, was en-

[87] Bor, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.* "I have been, with others of the council of state, twice or thrice at the examination of the prisoner. He declareth his coming to have been about an attempt against Breda (which is taken to be but a made and coloured thing), and withal to see if he could kill the Count Maurice—that Berlaymont was the mover and Ernestus privy to all, but as yet the truth of the practice and circumstances he openeth not flatly, which will be drawn from him ere he be left. Of profession he is a priest and born in Namur, having named six others employed about the same mischief, but the fellow is subtle and ready in his words to colour and answer anything, so that all is not to be credited that cometh from him."—Gilpin to Burghley, 2 April, 1594. (S. P. Office MS.)

The commissioner alluded to the forthcoming answer of the States-General in regard to the proposed negotiations for peace, in which these murderous attempts of the Spanish king and his representatives were to be hurled in his face with terrible emphasis, and spoke of them with the indignation of an honest Englishman:—"The States-General, not doubting but that the discovery of the said murder, when it shall be made known and published (whereby it may appear to the world what a most barbarous and abominable course the King of Spain and his do hold by practices against the persons of kings and princes), will not only strengthen and confirm the people here in their resolution to continue their defence and wars, but make all other potentates and countries dislike and detest such heathenish and wicked attempts and proceedings to the perpetual dishonour, reproach, and infamy of the authors and dealers."—Ibid.

gaged by General La Motte and Counsellor Assonleville to attempt the assassination of Prince Maurice.[88] La Motte took the man to the palace, and pretended at least to introduce him to the chamber of the archduke, who was said to be lying ill in bed. Du Four was advised to enrol himself in the body-guard at the Hague, and to seek an opportunity when the prince went hunting, or was mounting his horse, or was coming from church, or at some such unguarded moment, to take a shot at him. "Will you do what I ask," demanded from the bed the voice of him who was said to be Ernest, "will you kill this tyrant?" "I will," replied the soldier. "Then my son," was the parting benediction of the supposed archduke, "you will go straight to paradise."[89]

Afterwards he received good advice from Assonleville, and was assured that if he would come and hear a mass in the royal chapel next morning, that religious ceremony would make him invisible when he should make his attempt on the life of Maurice, and while he should be effecting his escape.[90] The poor wretch accordingly came next morning to chapel, where this miraculous mass was duly performed, and he then received a certain portion of his promised reward in ready money. He was also especially charged, in case he should be arrested, not to make a confession—as had been done by those previously employed in such work—as all complicity with him on part of his employers would certainly be denied.[91]

The miserable dupe was arrested, convicted, executed; and of course the denial was duly made on the part of the archduke, La Motte, and Assonleville. It was also announced, on behalf of Ernest, that some one else, fraudulently impersonating his Highness, had lain in the bed to which the culprit had been taken, and every one must hope that the statement was a true one.[92]

17 Nov. 1594.

Enough has been given to show the peculiar school of

[88] Meteren xvi. 335. Bor, III. 882, 883. Reyd, ix. 247.
[89] Ibid. "Figliol mio, se farete quello che m'avete promesso d'amazzar quel tyranno, andarete diritto in Paradiso." [90] Bor, *ubi sup.* [91] Ibid. [92] Ibid.

statesmanship according to the precepts of which the internal concerns and foreign affairs of the obedient Netherlands were now administered. Poison and pistols in the hands of obscure priests and deserters were relied on to bring about great political triumphs, while the mutinous royal armies, entrenched and defiant, were extorting capitulations from their own generals and their own sovereign upon his own soil.

Such a record as this seems rather like the exaggeration of a diseased fancy, seeking to pander to a corrupt public taste which feeds greedily upon horrors ; but, unfortunately, it is derived from the register of high courts of justice, from diplomatic correspondence, and from the confessions, without torture or hope of free pardon, of criminals. For a crowned king and his high functionaries and generals to devote so much of their time, their energies, and their money to the murder of brother and sister sovereigns, and other illustrious personages, was not to make after ages in love with the monarchic and aristocratic system, at least as thus administered. Popular governments may be deficient in polish, but a system resting for its chief support upon bribery and murder cannot be considered lovely by any healthy mind. And this is one of the lessons to be derived from the history of Philip II. and of the Holy League.

But besides mutiny and assassination there were also some feeble attempts at negotiation to characterize the Ernestian epoch at Brussels. The subject hardly needs more than a passing allusion.

Two Flemish juris-consults, Otto Hertius and Jerome Comans, offered their services to the archduke in the peace-making department. Ernest accepted the proposition, —although it was strongly opposed by Fuentes, who relied upon the more practical agency of Dr. Lopez, Andrada, Renichon, and the rest—and the peace-makers accordingly made their appearance at the Hague, under safe conduct, and provided with very conciliatory letters from his Highness to the States-General.[93] In all ages and under all circumstances

[93] Bentivoglio, P. III. lib. i. p. 390. Bor, III. 810–812.

it is safe to enlarge, with whatever eloquence may be at command, upon the blessings of peace and upon the horrors of war; for the appeal is not difficult to make, and a response is certain in almost every human breast. But it is another matter to descend from the general to the particular, and to demonstrate how the desirable may be attained and the horrible averted. The letters of Ernest were full of benignity and affection, breathing a most ardent desire that the miserable war, now a quarter of a century old, should be then and there terminated. But not one atom of concession was offered, no whisper breathed that the republic, if it should choose to lay down its victorious arms, and renounce its dearly gained independence, should share any different fate from that under which it saw the obedient provinces gasping before its eyes. To renounce religious and political liberty and self-government, and to submit unconditionally to the authority of Philip II. as administered by Ernest and Fuentes, was hardly to be expected as the result of the three years' campaigns of Maurice of Nassau.

The two doctors of law laid the affectionate common-places of the archduke before the States-General, each of them making, moreover, a long and flowery oration in which the same protestations of good will and hopes of future good-fellowship were distended to formidable dimensions by much windy rhetoric. The accusations which had been made against the Government of Brussels of complicity in certain projects of assassination were repelled with virtuous indignation.[94]

2 May. The answer of the States-General was wrathful and decided.[95] They informed the commissioners that they had taken up arms for a good cause and meant to retain them in their hands. They expressed their thanks for the expressions of good will which had been offered, but avowed their right to complain before God and the world of those who under pretext of peace were attempting to shed the innocent blood of Christians, and to procure the ruin and destruction of the Netherlands. To this end the state-council

[94] Bor, III. 810–812. [95] See the document in full in Bor, III. 813–815.

of Spain was more than ever devoted, being guilty of the most cruel and infamous proceedings and projects. They threw out a rapid and stinging summary of their wrongs; and denounced with scorn the various hollow attempts at negotiation during the preceding twenty-five years. Coming down to the famous years 1587 and 1588, they alluded in vehement terms to the fraudulent peace propositions which had been thrown as a veil over the Spanish invasion of England and the Armada; and they glanced at the mediation-projects of the emperor in 1591 at the desire of Spain, while armies were moving in force from Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands to crush the King of France, in order that Philip might establish his tyranny over all kings, princes, provinces, and republics. That the Spanish Government was secretly dealing with the emperor and other German potentates for the extension of his universal empire appeared from intercepted letters of the king—copies of which were communicated—from which it was sufficiently plain that the purpose of his Majesty was not to bestow peace and tranquillity upon the Netherlands. The names of Fuentes, Clemente, Ybarra, were sufficient in themselves to destroy any such illusion. They spoke in blunt terms of the attempt of Dr. Lopez to poison Queen Elizabeth, at the instigation of Count Fuentes, for fifty thousand crowns to be paid by the King of Spain: they charged upon the same Fuentes and upon Ybarra that they had employed the same Andrada to murder the King of France with a nosegay of roses; and they alluded further to the revelations of Michael Renichon, who was to murder Maurice of Nassau and kidnap Frederic William, even as their father and brother had been already murdered and kidnapped.[96]

For such reasons the archduke might understand by what persons and what means the good people of the Netherlands were deceived, and how difficult it was for the States to forget such lessons, or to imagine anything honest in the present propositions.

[96] Bor, III. 813–815.

The States declared themselves, on the contrary, more called upon than ever before to be upon the watch against the stealthy proceedings of the Spanish council of state—bearing in mind the late execrable attempts at assassination, and the open war which was still carried on against the King of France.

And although it was said that his Highness was displeased with such murderous and hostile proceedings, still it was necessary for the States to beware of the nefarious projects of the King of Spain and his council.[97]

After the conversion of Henry IV. to the Roman Church had been duly accomplished that monarch had sent a secret envoy to Spain. The mission of this agent —De Varenne by name—excited intense anxiety and suspicion in England and Holland and among the Protestants of France and Germany. It was believed that Henry had not only made a proposition of a separate peace with Philip, but that he had formally but mysteriously demanded the hand of the Infanta in marriage. Such a catastrophe as this seemed to the heated imaginations of the great body of Calvinists throughout Europe, who had so faithfully supported the King of Navarre up to the moment of his great apostasy, the most cruel and deadly treachery of all. That the princess with the many suitors should come to reign over France after all —not as the bride of her own father, not as the queen-consort of Ernest the Habsburger or of Guise the Lorrainer, but as the lawful wife of Henry the Huguenot—seemed almost too astounding for belief, even amid the chances and changes of that astonishing epoch. Yet Duplessis Mornay avowed that the project was entertained, and that he had it from the very lips of the secret envoy who was to negotiate the marriage. "La Varenne is on his way to Spain," wrote Duplessis to the

27 May, 1594.

[97] Bor, III. 813–815. The archduke, as might be supposed, was not pleased with the reply of the States, and characterised it as so arrogant and outrageous that he would not have allowed his Majesty's ears to be offended by it had not the States, like insolent people as they were, already caused it to be printed and published. Ernest to Philip, 4 Sept. 1594. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

Duke of Bouillon, "in company with a gentleman of Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who brought the first overtures. He is to bring back the portrait of the Infanta. 'Tis said that the marriage is to be on condition that the Queen and the Netherlands are comprised in the peace, but you know that this cannot be satisfactorily arranged for those two parties. All this was once guess-work, but is now history." [98]

That eminent diplomatist and soldier Mendoza had already on his return from France given the King of Spain to understand that there were no hopes of his obtaining the French crown either for himself or for his daughter, that all the money lavished on the chiefs of the League was thrown away, and that all their promises were idle wind. Mendoza in consequence had fallen into contempt at court, but Philip, observing apparently that there might have been something correct in his statements, had recently recalled him, and, notwithstanding his blindness and other infirmities, was disposed to make use of him in secret negotiations. Mendoza had accordingly sent a confidential agent to Henry IV. offering his good offices, now that the king had returned to the bosom of the Church.

This individual, whose name was Nuñez, was admitted by De Béthune (afterwards the famous Duc de Sully) to the presence of the king, but De Béthune, believing it probable that the Spaniard had been sent to assassinate Henry, held both the hands of the emissary during the whole interview, besides subjecting him to a strict personal visitation beforehand. Nuñez stated that he was authorized to propose to his Majesty a marriage with the Infanta Clara Isabella, and Henry, much to the discontent of De Béthune, listened eagerly to the suggestion, and promised to send a secret agent to Spain to confer on the subject with Mendoza.

The choice he made of La Varenne, whose real name was Guillaume Fouquet, for this mission was still more offensive

[98] "Je le sais de la bouche du porteur qui ne le m'osa deguiser parceque je monstrai en être adverti, ... c'etait alors devination, maintenant histoire."—Mem. et Corresp. iv. 563 18 Sept. 1593.

to De Béthune. Fouquet had originally been a cook in the service of Madame Catherine, and was famous for his talent for larding poultry, but he had subsequently entered the household of Henry, where he had been employed in the most degrading service which one man can render to another.[99]

On his appointment to this office of secret diplomacy he assumed all the airs of an ambassador, while Henry took great pains to contradict the reports which were spread as to the true nature of this mission to Spain.[100]

Duplessis was, in truth, not very far wrong in his conjectures, but, as might be supposed, Henry was most anxious to conceal these secret negotiations with his Catholic Majesty from the Huguenot chiefs whom he had so recently deserted. "This is all done without the knowledge of the Duke of Bouillon," said Calvaert, "or at least under a very close disguise, as he himself keenly feels and confesses to me."[101] The envoy of the republic, as well as the leaders of the Protestant party in France, were resolved if possible to break off these dark and dangerous intrigues, the nature of which they so shrewdly suspected, and to substitute for them an open rupture of Henry with the King of Spain, and a formal declaration of war against him. None of the diplomatists or political personages engaged in these great affairs, in which the whole world was so deeply interested, manifested more sagacity and insight on this occasion than did the Dutch statesmen. We have seen that even Sir Edward Stafford

[99] "La Varenne," said Madame Catherine on one occasion, "tu as plus gagné à porter les poulets de mon frere, qu'à piquer les miens." Mémoires de Sully, Liv. vi. p. 296, note 6. He accumulated a large fortune in these dignified pursuits—having, according to Winwood, landed estates to the annual amount of sixty thousand francs a-year—and gave large dowries to his daughters, whom he married into noblest families; "which is the more remarkable," adds Winwood, "considering the services wherein he is employed about the king, which is to be the Mezzano for his loves; the place from whence he came, which is out of the kitchen of Madame the king's sister."—Memorials, i. 380.

[100] Mém. de Sully, *ubi sup.*

[101] Deventer. Gedenkstukken, &c. ii. 37. In this most valuable contribution to the history of the Netherlands and of Europe, the learned editor has been the first to give—so far as I am aware—the true history of this remarkable negotiation. The accounts by contemporary historians show the writers to have been kept as much in the dark as the English envoy was, an extract from whose private letter to Lord Burghley will be found in note 2, p. 216. Compare Bor, III. 759–763

was deceived up to a very late moment, as to the rumoured intentions of Henry to enter the Catholic Church. Envoy Edmonds was now equally and completely in the dark as to the mission of Varenne, and informed his Government that the only result of it was that the secret agent to Spain was favoured, through the kindness of Mendoza, with a distant view of Philip II. with his son and daughter at their devotions in the chapel of the Escorial. This was the tale generally recounted and believed after the agent's return from Spain, so that Varenne was somewhat laughed at as having gone to Spain on a fool's errand, and as having got nothing from Mendoza but a disavowal of his former propositions. But the shrewd Calvaert, who had entertained familiar relations with La Varenne, received from that personage after his return a very different account of his excursion to the Escorial from the one generally circulated. "Coming from Monceaux to Paris in his company," wrote Calvaert in a secret despatch to the States, "I had the whole story from him. The chief part of his negotiations with Don Bernardino de Mendoza was that if his Majesty (the French king) would abandon the Queen of England and your Highnesses (the States of the Netherlands), there were no conditions that would be refused the king, including the hand of the Infanta, together with a good recompense for the kingdom of Navarre. La Varenne maintained that the King of Spain had caused these negotiations to be entered upon at this time with him in the certain hope and intention of a definite conclusion, alleging to me many pertinent reasons, and among others that he, having been lodged at Madrid, through the adroitness of Don Bernardino, among all the agents of the League, and hearing all their secrets and negotiations, had never been discovered, but had always been supposed to be one of the League himself. He said also that he was well assured that the Infanta in her heart had an affection for the French king, and notwithstanding any resolutions that might be taken (to which I referred, meaning the projects for bestowing her on the house of Austria) that she with her father's consent or in case of

his death would not fail to carry out this marriage. You may from all this, even out of the proposal for compensation for the kingdom of Navarre (of which his Majesty also let out something to me inadvertently), collect the reasons why such feeble progress is made in so great an occasion as now presents itself for a declaration of war and an open alliance with your Highnesses. I shall not fail to watch these events, even in case of the progress of the said resolutions, notwithstanding the effects of which it is my opinion that this secret intrigue is not to be abandoned. To this end, besides the good intelligence which one gets by means of good friends, a continual and agreeable presentation of oneself to his Majesty, in order to see and hear everything, is necessary." [102]

Certainly, here were reasons more than sufficient why Henry should be making but feeble preparations for open war in alliance with England and the republic against Philip, as such a step was hardly compatible with the abandonment of England and the republic and the espousal of Philip's daughter—projects which Henry's commissioner had just been discussing with Philip's agent at Madrid and the Escorial.

Truly it was well for the republican envoy to watch events as closely as possible, to make the most of intelligence from his good friends, and to present himself as frequently and as agreeably as possible to his Majesty, that he might hear and see everything. There was much to see and to hear, and it needed adroitness and courage, not to slip or stumble in such dark ways where the very ground seemed often to be sliding from beneath the feet.

To avoid the catastrophe of an alliance between Henry, Philip, and the Pope against Holland and England, it was a pressing necessity for Holland and England to force Henry into open war against Philip. To this end the Dutch statesmen were bending all their energies. Meantime Elizabeth regarded the campaign in Artois and Hainault with little favour.

[102] Deventer, *ubi sup.*

As he took leave on departing for France, La Varenne had requested Mendoza to write to King Henry, but the Spaniard excused himself—although professing the warmest friendship for his Majesty—on the ground of the impossibility of addressing him correctly. "If I call him here King of Navarre, I might as well put my head on the block at once," he observed; "if I call him King of France, my master has not yet recognized him as such; if I call him anything else, he will himself be offended." [103]

And the vision of Philip in black on his knees, with his children about him, and a rapier at his side, passed with the contemporary world as the only phenomenon of this famous secret mission.[104]

[103] Bor, III. 759–763.

[104] Ibid. Envoy Edmondes gave a detailed account of the matter, so far as he understood it, from Dieppe:—"Don Bernardino," he says, "asked to hear what he (La Varenne) had in charge, to which the other made answer to have nothing, only to have brought eyes to see and ears to hear what he would propound. . . . . Whereupon Bernardino made him answer that he was to avow nothing that his said servant had delivered, which he said to be in him a less shame than in Mons. de Mayne having disavowed a person of the quality of Mons. de Villeroy. La Varenne therefore, seeing he could draw no other payment from him, prayed him, to the end his journey might not be to him altogether fruitless, to procure that he might have a sight of the king and the beauties of the Scuriall, his house, which he accordingly performed, causing him to be secretly brought into the chapel, where he saw the king at mass, of purpose attired in extraordinary demonstration of liveliness, wearing the sword and cape, which he had not before done in two years; with also the young prince and the Infanta in like colour, was brought another time to see him walking in the garden, but without speaking at all unto him. Being therein so satisfied, and therewith dismissed, Don Bernardino prayed him at his departure to excuse him to the king for not writing unto him, which he said he could not do in qualifying him as appertained without disproving the justness of his master's quarrel, and thereby incur peril; and to give him an undue title, that he was too much his servant, and only therefore to let him know that so as the pope would speak in the king's favour, there is very good reason to make the King of Spain to understand to a union with him, and that is all the return he bringeth of his negotiation; but the king, to cover the shame thereof, doth pay himself with great contentment of the good service which by that occasion he hath otherwise done him, in discovering, by haunting unknown divers French there of the League, a dangerous enterprise upon Bordeaux, which having on his return declared to Marshal Matignon, he hath thereupon apprehended certain of the principal of the town conspirators therein," &c. Edmondes to Burghley, 13 Nov. 1593. (S. P. Office MS.) Compare Bor, *ubi sup.*

La Varenne was subsequently sent to England to give a report—more or less ingenuous—of his Spanish mission to the queen. She at first refused to receive him on the ground that he had formerly used disrespectful language concerning herself, but she subsequently relented. He reported that he had found the king remarkably jolly (*gaillard*) and healthy for his years, and had also seen the rest of the royal family. Don Bernardino, he

But Henry, besides this demonstration towards Spain, lost no time in despatching a special minister to the republic and to England, who was instructed to make the most profuse, elaborate, and conciliatory explanations as to his recent conversion and as to his future intentions.[105] Never would he make peace, he said, with Spain without the full consent of the States and of England ; the dearest object of his heart in making his peace with Rome having been to restore peace to his own distracted realm, to bring all Christians into one brotherhood, and to make a united attack upon the grand Turk—a vision which the cheerful monarch hardly intended should ever go beyond the ivory gate of dreams, but which furnished substance enough for several well-rounded periods in the orations of De Morlans.

That diplomatist, after making the strongest representations to Queen Elizabeth as to the faithful friendship of his master, and the necessity he was under of pecuniary and military assistance, had received generous promises of aid both in men and money—three thousand men besides the troops actually serving in Brittany—from that sagacious sovereign, notwithstanding the vehement language in which she had rebuked her royal brother's apostasy.[106] He now came for the same purpose to the Hague, where he made very eloquent harangues to the States-General, acknowledging that the republic had ever been the most upright, perfect, and undisguised friend to his master and to France in their darkest days and deepest affliction ; that she had loved the king and kingdom for themselves, not merely hanging on to their prosperity, but, on the contrary, doing her best to produce that prosperity by her

said, who had given the king to understand, now that he was Catholic, that he could find means to reconcile him with the king his master, whereby he might maintain himself peaceably in his kingdom, had nevertheless professed ignorance of any such matter when he found that Varenne had no commission except to see and to hear. So the agent was fain—according to his public statement—to content himself with a distant view of the most catholic king at his devotions. Noel de Caron to the States-General, 4 Dec. 1593. (Hague Archives.) No one but Calvaert seems to have succeeded in pumping the secret envoy, but by Calvaert the States-General were enlightened, and put thoroughly on their guard as to the possible designs of Henry.

[105] De Morlans to the States-General, in Bor, III. 721–726. 26 Aug. 1593.

[106] Bor, III. 719.

contributions in soldiers, ships, and subsidies. "The king," said De Morlans, "is deeply grieved that he can prove his gratitude only in words for so many benefits conferred, which are absolutely without example, but he has commissioned me to declare that if God should ever give him the occasion, he will prove how highly he places your friendship."

The envoy assured the States that all fears entertained by those of the reformed religion on account of the conversion of his Majesty were groundless. Nothing was farther from the king's thoughts than to injure those noble spirits with whom his soul had lived so long, and whom he so much loved and honoured. No man knew better than the king did the character of those who professed *the Religion*, their virtue, valour, resolution, and patience in adversity. Their numbers had increased in war, their virtues had been purified by affliction, they had never changed their position, whether battles had been won or lost. Should ever an attempt be made to take up arms against them within his realms, and should there be but five hundred of them against ten thousand, the king, remembering their faithful and ancient services, would leave the greater number in order to die at the head of his old friends. He was determined that they should participate in all the honours of the kingdom, and with regard to a peace with Spain, he would have as much care for the interests of the United Provinces as for his own. But a peace was impossible with that monarch, whose object was to maintain his own realms in peace while he kept France in perpetual revolt against the king whom God had given her. The King of Spain had trembled at Henry's cradle, at his youth, at the bloom of his manhood, and knew that he had inflicted too much injury upon him ever to be on friendly terms with him. The envoy was instructed to say that his master never expected to be in amity with one who had ruined his house, confiscated his property, and caused so much misery to France; and he earnestly hoped—without presuming to dictate—that the States-General would in this critical emergency manifest their generosity. If the king were not assisted now, both

king and kingdom would perish. If he were assisted, the succour would bear double fruit.[107]

The sentiments expressed on the part of Henry towards his faithful subjects of the Religion, the heretic Queen of England, and the stout Dutch Calvinists who had so long stood by him, were most noble. It was pity that, at the same moment, he was proposing to espouse the Infanta, and to publish the Council of Trent.

The reply of the States-General to these propositions of the French envoy was favourable, and it was agreed that a force of three thousand foot and five hundred horse should be sent to the assistance of the king. Moreover, the state-paper drawn up on this occasion was conceived with so much sagacity and expressed with so much eloquence, as particularly to charm the English queen when it was communicated to her Majesty. She protested very loudly and vehemently to Noel de Caron, envoy from the provinces at London, that this response on the part of his Government to De Morlans was one of the wisest documents that she had ever seen. "In all their actions," said she, "the States-General show their sagacity, and indeed, it is the wisest Government ever known among republics. I would show you," she added to the gentlemen around her, "the whole of the paper if it were this moment at hand." [108]

After some delays, it was agreed between the French Government and that of the United Provinces, that the king should divide his army into three parts, and renew the military operations against Spain with the expiration of the truce at the end of the year (1593).

One body, composed of the English contingent, together with three thousand French horse, three thousand Swiss, and four thousand French harquebus-men, were to be under his own immediate command, and were to act against the enemy wherever it should appear to his Majesty most advantageous. A second army was to expel the rebels and their foreign allies from Normandy and reduce Rouen to obedience. A third

[107] Address of Morlans, *ubi sup.* [108] Bor, III. 726.

was to make a campaign in the provinces of Artois and Hainault, under the Duke of Bouillon (more commonly called the Viscount Turenne), in conjunction with the forces to be supplied by the republic. "Any treaty of peace on our part with the King of Spain," said the States-General, "is our certain ruin. This is an axiom. That monarch's object is to incorporate into his own realms not only all the states and possessions of neighbouring kings, principalities, and powers, but *also all Christendom, aye, the whole world*, were it possible. We joyfully concur then in your Majesty's resolution to carry on the war in Artois and Hainault, and agree to your suggestion of diversions on our part by sieges and succour by contingents."[109]

Balagny, meantime, who had so long led an independent existence at Cambray, now agreed to recognise Henry's authority, in consideration of sixty-seven thousand crowns yearly pension and the dignity of Marshal of France.[110]

Towards the end of the year 1594, Buzanval, the regular French envoy at the Hague, began to insist more warmly than seemed becoming that the campaign in Artois and Hainault—so often the base of military operations on the part of Spain against France—should begin. Further achievements on the part of Maurice after the fall of Groningen were therefore renounced for that year, and his troops went into garrison and winter-quarters.[111] The States-General, who had also been sending supplies, troops, and ships to Brittany to assist the king, now, after soundly rebuking Buzanval for his intemperate language, entrusted their contingent for the proposed frontier campaign to Count Philip Nassau, who accordingly took the field toward the end of the year at the head of twenty-eight companies of foot and five squadrons of cavalry. He made his junction with Turenne-Bouillon, but the duke, although provided with a tremendous proclamation, was but indifferently supplied with troops. The German levies, long-expected, were slow in moving and on the whole it seemed

[109] Bor, III. 766.

[110] Buzanval to the States-General, 8 Dec. 1593, *apud* Bor, III. 765, 766.

[111] Bor, 846-859.

that the operations might have been continued by Maurice with more effect, according to his original plan, than in this rather desultory fashion.[112] The late winter campaign on the border was feeble and a failure.

The bonds of alliance, however, were becoming very close between Henry and the republic. Despite the change in religion on the part of the king, and the pangs which it had occasioned in the hearts of leading Netherlanders, there was still the traditional attraction between France and the States, which had been so remarkably manifested during the administration of William the Silent. The republic was more restive than ever under the imperious and exacting friendship of Elizabeth, and, feeling more and more its own strength, was making itself more and more liable to the charge of ingratitude, so constantly hurled in its face by the queen. And Henry, now that he felt himself really king of France, was not slow to manifest a similar ingratitude or an equal love of independence. Both monarch and republic, chafing under the protection of Elizabeth, were drawn into so close a union as to excite her anger and jealousy—sentiments which in succeeding years were to become yet more apparent. And now, while Henry still retained the chivalrous and flowery phraseology, so sweet to her ears, in his personal communications to the queen, his ministers were in the habit of using much plainer language. "Mr. de Sancy said to me," wrote the Netherland minister in France, Calvaert, "that his Majesty and your Highnesses (the States-General) must without long delay conclude an alliance offensive and defensive. In regard to England, which perhaps might look askance at this matter, he told me it would be invited also by his Majesty into the same alliance ; but if, according to custom, it shilly-shallied, and without coming to deeds or to succour should put him off with words, he should in that case proceed with our alliance without England, not doubting that many other potentates in Italy and Germany would join in it likewise. He said too, that he, the day before the departure of the

[112] Bor, 846–859.

English ambassador, had said these words to him in the presence of his Majesty; namely, that England had entertained his Majesty sixteen months long with far-fetched and often-repeated questions and discontents, that one had submitted to this sort of thing so long as his Majesty was only king of Mantes, Dieppe, and Louviers, but that his Majesty being now king of Paris would be no longer a servant of those who should advise him to suffer it any longer or accept it as good payment; that England must treat his Majesty according to his quality, and with deeds, not words. He added that the ambassador had very anxiously made answer to these words, and had promised that when he got back to England he would so arrange that his Majesty should be fully satisfied, insisting to the last on the alliance then proposed." [113]

In Germany, meanwhile, there was much protocolling, and more hard drinking, at the Diet of Ratisbon. The Protestant princes did little for their cause against the new designs of Spain and the moribund League, while the Catholics did less to assist Philip. In truth, the holy Roman Empire, threatened with a Turkish invasion, had neither power nor inclination to help the new universal empire of the west into existence. So the princes and grandees of Germany, while Amurath was knocking at the imperial gates, busied themselves with banquetting and other diplomatic work, but sent few reiters either to the east or west.[114]

Philip's envoys were indignant at the apathy displayed towards the great Catholic cause, and felt humbled at the imbecility exhibited by Spain in its efforts against the Netherlands and France. San Clemente, who was attending the

[113] M. L. van Deventer—Gedenkstukken van Johan van Oldenbarnevelt en zign Tijd, ii. 20, 21. (22 April, 1594.) De Sancy expressed himself in still stronger language a few weeks later: "Should England delay or interpose difficulties," said he, "then the king will at once go into company with the States-General; aye, he will bring this alliance forward principally in consideration and respect for the States, whose authority he wishes to establish, . . . declaring with many words that your Highnesses are exactly the power in the whole world to which the king is under the greatest obligation, and in which he places his chief confidence." Ibid. pp. 24, 25 (11 May, 1594.)

[114] Bor, III. 852–854.

Diet at Ratisbon, was shocked at the scenes he witnessed. "In less than three months," said that temperate Spaniard, "they have drunk more than five million florins' worth of wine, at a time when the Turk has invaded the frontiers of Germany; and among those who have done the most of this consumption of wine, there is not one who is going to give any assistance on the frontier. In consequence of these disorders my purse is drained so low, that unless the king helps me I am ruined. You must tell our master that the reputation of his grandeur and strength has never been so low as it is now in Germany. The events in France and those which followed in the Netherlands have thrown such impediments in the negotiations here, that not only our enemies make sport of Marquis Havré and myself, but even our friends—who are very few—dare not go to public feasts, weddings, and dinners, because they are obliged to apologize for us." [115]

Truly the world-empire was beginning to crumble. "The emperor has been desiring twenty times," continued the envoy, "to get back to Prague from the Diet, but the people hold him fast like a steer. As I think over all that passes, I lose all judgment, for I have no money, nor influence, nor reputation. Meantime, I see this rump of an empire keeping itself with difficulty upon its legs. 'Tis full of wrangling and discord about religion, and yet there is the Turk with two hundred thousand men besieging a place forty miles from Vienna, which is the last outpost. God grant it may last." [116]

Such was the aspect of the Christian world at the close of the year 1594.

[115] Intercepted letters of San Clemente to Idiaquez, 30 Aug. 1594. *Apud* Bor, *ubi sup.* [116] Ibid.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Formal declaration of war against Spain — Marriage festivities — Death of Archduke Ernest — His year of government — Fuentes declared governor general — Disaffection of the Duke of Arschot and Count Arenberg — Death of the Duke of Arschot — Fuentes besieges Le Catelet — The fortress of Ham, sold to the Spanish by De Gomeron, besieged and taken by the Duke of Bouillon — Execution of De Gomeron — Death of Colonel Verdugo —Siege of Dourlens by Fuentes — Death of La Motte — Death of Charles Mansfeld — Total defeat of the French — Murder of Admiral De Villars — Dourlens captured, and the garrison and citizens put to the sword — Military operations in eastern Netherlands and on the Rhine — Maurice lays siege to Groento — Mondragon hastening to its relief, Prince Maurice raises the siege — Skirmish between Maurice and Mondragon — Death of Philip of Nassau — Death of Mondragon — Bombardment and surrender of Weerd Castle — Maurice retires into winter quarters — Campaign of Henry IV. — He besieges Dijon — Surrender of Dijon — Absolution granted to Henry by the pope — Career of Balagny at Cambray — Progress of the siege — Capitulation of the town — Suicide of the Princess of Cambray, wife of Balagny.

THE year 1595 opened with a formal declaration of war by the King of France against the King of Spain.[1] It would be difficult to say for exactly how many years the war now declared had already been waged, but it was a considerable advantage to the United Netherlands that the manifesto had been at last regularly issued. And the manifesto was certainly not deficient in bitterness. Not often in Christian history has a monarch been solemnly and officially accused by a brother sovereign of suborning assassins against his life. Bribery, stratagem, and murder, were, however, so entirely the commonplace machinery of Philip's administration as to make an allusion to the late attempt of Châstel appear quite natural in Henry's declaration of war. The king further stigmatized in energetic language the long succession of intrigues by which the monarch of

17 Jan. 1595.

[1] Bor, IV. xxx. 2, *seqq.* De Thou, xii. lib. iii. pp. 342, *seqq.*

Spain, as chief of the Holy League, had been making war upon him by means of his own subjects, for the last half dozen years. Certainly there was hardly need of an elaborate statement of grievances. The deeds of Philip required no herald, unless Henry was prepared to abdicate his hardly-earned title to the throne of France.

Nevertheless the politic Gascon subsequently regretted the fierce style in which he had fulminated his challenge. He was accustomed to observe that no state paper required so much careful pondering as a declaration of war,[2] and that it was scarcely possible to draw up such a document without committing many errors in the phraseology. The man who never knew fear, despondency, nor resentment, was already instinctively acting on the principle that a king should deal with his enemy as if sure to become his friend, and with his friends as if they might easily change to foes.[3]

The answer to the declaration was delayed for two months. When the reply came it of course breathed nothing but the most benignant sentiments in regard to France, while it
7 March, 1595. expressed regret that it was necessary to carry fire and sword through that country in order to avert the unutterable woe which the crimes of the heretic Prince of Béarne were bringing upon all mankind.[4]

It was a solace for Philip to call the legitimate king by the title borne by him when heir-presumptive, and to persist in denying to him that absolution which, as the whole world was aware, the Vicar of Christ was at that very moment in the most solemn manner about to bestow upon him.

More devoted to the welfare of France than were the French themselves, he was determined that a foreign prince —himself, his daughter, or one of his nephews—should supplant the descendant of St. Louis on the French throne. More catholic than the pope he could not permit the heretic, whom his Holiness was just washing whiter than snow, to intrude himself into the society of Christian sovereigns.

[2] Bor. De Thou, *ubi sup.* [3] Sully I. lib. vii. p. 412.
[4] Bor. De Thou, *ubi sup.*

The winter movements by Bouillon in Luxembourg, sustained by Philip Nassau campaigning with a meagre force on the French frontier, were not very brilliant. The Netherland regiments quartered at Yssoire, La Ferté, and in the neighbourhood accomplished very little, and their numbers were sadly thinned by dysentery. A sudden and successful stroke, too, by which that daring soldier Heraugiere, who had been the chief captor of Breda, obtained possession of the town and castle of Huy, produced no permanent advantage. This place, belonging to the Bishop of Liege, with its stone bridge over the Meuse, was an advantageous position from which to aid the operations of Bouillon in Luxembourg. Heraugiere was, however, not sufficiently reinforced, and Huy was a month later re-captured by La Motte.[5] The campaigning was languid during that winter in the United Netherlands, but the merry-making was energetic. The nuptials of Hohenlo with Mary, eldest daughter of William the Silent and own sister of the captive Philip William; of the Duke of Bouillon with Elizabeth, one of the daughters of the same illustrious prince by his third wife, Charlotte of Bourbon; and of Count Everard Solms, the famous general of the Zeeland troops, with Sabina, daughter of the unfortunate Lamoral Egmont, were celebrated with much pomp during the months of February and March.[6] The States of Holland and of Zeeland made magnificent presents of diamonds to the brides; the Countess Hohenlo receiving besides a yearly income of three thousand florins for the lives of herself and her husband.[7]

In the midst of these merry marriage bells at the Hague a funeral knell was sounding in Brussels. On the 20th February, the governor-general of the obedient Netherlands, Archduke Ernest, breathed his last. His career had not been so illustrious as the promises of the Spanish king and the allegories of schoolmaster Houwaerts had led him to expect. He had not espoused the Infanta nor been crowned King of France. He had not blasted the rebellious

20 Feb. 1595.

[5] Bor, IV. 8, 10. [6] Ibid. 13. [7] Ibid.

Netherlands with Cyclopean thunderbolts, nor unbound the Belgic Andromeda from the rock of doom. His brief year of government had really been as dismal as, according to the announcement of his sycophants, it should have been amazing. He had accomplished nothing, and all that was left him was to die at the age of forty-two, over head and ears in debt, a disappointed, melancholy man. He was very indolent, enormously fat, very chaste, very expensive, fond of fine liveries and fine clothes, so solemn and stately as never to be known to laugh, but utterly without capacity either as a statesman or a soldier.[8] He would have shone as a portly abbot ruling over peaceful friars, but he was not born to ride a revolutionary whirlwind, nor to evoke order out of chaos. Past and Present were contending with each other in fierce elemental strife within his domain. A world was in dying agony, another world was coming, full-armed, into existence within the hand-breadth of time and of space where he played his little part, but he dreamed not of it. He passed away like a shadow, and was soon forgotten.

An effort was made, during the last illness of Ernest, to procure from him the appointment of the elector of Cologne as temporary successor to the government, but Count Fuentes was on the spot and was a man of action. He produced a power in the French language from Philip, with a blank for the name. This had been intended for the case of Peter Ernest Mansfeld's possible death during his provisional administration, and Fuentes now claimed the right of inserting his own name.[9]

The dying Ernest consented, and upon his death Fuentes was declared governor-general until the king's further pleasure should be known.

Pedro de Guzman, Count of Fuentes, a Spaniard of the hard and antique type, was now in his sixty-fourth year. The pupil and near relative of the Duke of Alva, he was

[8] Bor, IV. 12. Coloma, viii. 162.

[9] Diego de Ybarra to Philip, 19 Feb. 1595. Est. de Ybarra to the Secretaries same date. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

already as odious to the Netherlanders as might have been inferred from such education and such kin. A dark, grizzled, baldish man, with high steep forehead, long, haggard, leathern visage, sweeping beard, and large, stern, commanding, menacing eyes, with his Brussels ruff of point lace and his Milan coat of proof, he was in personal appearance not unlike the terrible duke whom men never named without a shudder, although a quarter of a century had passed since he had ceased to curse the Netherlands with his presence. Elizabeth of England was accustomed to sneer at Fuentes because he had retreated before Essex in that daring commander's famous foray into Portugal.[10] The queen called the Spanish general a timid old woman. If her gibe were true, it was fortunate for her, for Henry of France, and for the republic, that there were not many more such old women to come from Spain to take the place of the veteran chieftains who were destined to disappear so rapidly during this year in Flanders. He was a soldier of fortune, loved fighting, not only for the fighting's sake, but for the prize-money which was to be accumulated by campaigning, and he was wont to say that he meant to enter Paradise sword in hand.[11]

Meantime his appointment excited the wrath of the provincial magnates. The Duke of Arschot was beside himself with frenzy, and swore that he would never serve under Fuentes nor sit at his council-board. The duke's brother, Marquis Havré, and his son-in-law, Count Arenberg, shared in the hatred, although they tried to mitigate the vehemence of its expression. But Arschot swore that no man had the right to take precedence of him in the council of state, and that the appointment of this or any Spaniard was a violation of the charters of the provinces and of the promises of his Majesty.[12] As if it were for the nobles of the obedient provinces to prate of charters and of oaths! Their brethren under the banner of the republic had been teaching Philip for a whole generation how they could deal with the privi-

[10] Vol. II. of this work, p. 556. [11] Fruin. Tien Jaaren, &c., 192, note.
[12] Est. de Ybarra to Philip, 6 March, 1595. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

leges of freemen and with the perjury of tyrants. It was late in the day for the obedient Netherlanders to remember their rights. Havré and Arenberg, dissembling their own wrath, were abused and insulted by the duke when they tried to pacify him. They proposed a compromise, according to which Arschot should be allowed to preside in the council of state while Fuentes should content himself with the absolute control of the army. This would be putting a bit of fat in the duke's mouth, they said.[13] Fuentes would hear of no such arrangement. After much talk and daily attempts to pacify this great Netherlander, his relatives at last persuaded him to go home to his country place. He even promised Arenberg and his wife that he would go to Italy, in pursuance of a vow made to our lady of Loretto. Arenberg privately intimated to Stephen Ybarra that there was a certain oil, very apt to be efficacious in similar cases of irritation, which might be applied with prospect of success. If his father-in-law could only receive some ten thousand florins which he claimed as due to him from Government, this would do more to quiet him than a regiment of soldiers could. He also suggested that Fuentes should call upon the duke, while Secretary Ybarra should excuse himself by sickness for not having already paid his respects. This was done. Fuentes called. The duke returned the call, and the two conversed amicably about the death of the archduke, but entered into no political discussion.

Arschot then invited the whole council of state, except John Baptist Tassis, to a great dinner. He had prepared a paper to read to them in which he represented the great dangers likely to ensue from such an appointment as this of Fuentes, but declared that he washed his hands of the consequences, and that he had determined to leave a country where he was of so little account. He would then close his eyes and ears to everything that might occur, and thus escape the infamy of remaining in a country where so

[13] Ybarra to Philip, 6 March, 1595. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) "Una pella de sebo en la boca para acquietarle."

little account was made of him. He was urged to refrain from reading this paper and to invite Tassis. After a time he consented to suppress the document, but he manfully refused to bid the objectionable diplomatist to his banquet.[14]

The dinner took place and passed off pleasantly enough. Arschot did not read his manifesto, but, as he warmed with wine, he talked a great deal of nonsense which, according to Stephen Ybarra, much resembled it, and he vowed that thenceforth he would be blind and dumb to all that might occur.[15] A few days later, he paid a visit to the new governor-general, and took a peaceful farewell of him. "Your Majesty knows very well what he is," wrote Fuentes: "he is nothing but talk."[16] Before leaving the country he sent a bitter complaint to Ybarra, to the effect that the king had entirely forgotten him, and imploring that financier's influence to procure for him some gratuity from his Majesty. He was in such necessity, he said, that it was no longer possible for him to maintain his household.[17]

And with this petition the grandee of the obedient provinces shook the dust from his shoes, and left his natal soil for ever. He died on the 11th December of the same year in Venice.

His son the Prince of Chimay, his brother, and son-in-law, and the other obedient nobles, soon accommodated themselves to the new administration, much as they had been inclined to bluster at first about their privileges. The governor soon reported that matters were proceeding very smoothly.[18] There was a general return to the former docility now that such a disciplinarian as Fuentes held the reins.

The opening scenes of the campaign between the Spanish governor and France were, as usual, in Picardy. The Marquis of Varambon made a demonstration in the neighbourhood of Dourlens—a fortified town on the river Authie,

[14] Ybarra to Philip, 6 March, 1595. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)
[15] Ibid.
[16] Fuentes to Philip, 28 March, 1595. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) "Es el que V. Mag^{d}. sabe, contentandose con hablar."
[17] Letters of Ybarra, *ubi sup.*
[18] Ybarra to Philip, 16 March, 1595.

lying in an open plain, very deep in that province—while Fuentes took the field with eight thousand men, and laid siege to Le Catelet. He had his eye, however, upon Ham. That important stronghold was in the hands of a certain nobleman called De Gomeron, who had been an energetic Leaguer, and was now disposed, for a handsome consideration, to sell himself to the King of Spain. In the auction of governors and generals then going on in every part of France it had been generally found that Henry's money was more to be depended upon in the long run, although Philip's bids were often very high, and, for a considerable period, the payments regular. Gomeron's upset price for himself was twenty-five thousand crowns in cash, and a pension of eight thousand a year. Upon these terms he agreed to receive a Spanish garrison into the town, and to cause the French in the citadel to be sworn into the service of the Spanish king. Fuentes agreed to the bargain and paid the adroit tradesman, who knew so well how to turn a penny for himself, a large portion of the twenty-five thousand crowns upon the nail.

De Gomeron was to proceed to Brussels to receive the residue. His brother-in-law, M. d'Orville, commanded in the citadel, and so soon as the Spanish troops had taken possession of the town its governor claimed full payment of his services.

But difficulties awaited him in Brussels. He was informed that a French garrison could not be depended upon for securing the fortress, but that town and citadel must both be placed in Spanish hands. De Gomeron loudly protesting that this was not according to contract, was calmly assured, by command of Fuentes, that unless the citadel were at once evacuated and surrendered, he would not receive the balance of his twenty-five thousand crowns, and that he should instantly lose his head. Here was more than De Gomeron had bargained for; but this particular branch of commerce in revolutionary times, although lucrative, has always its risks. De Gomeron, thus driven to the wall, sent a letter by

a Spanish messenger to his brother-in-law, ordering him to surrender the fortress. D'Orville—who meantime had been making his little arrangements with the other party—protested that the note had been written under duress, and refused to comply with its directions.

Time was pressing, for the Duke of Bouillon and the Count of St. Pol lay with a considerable force in the neighbourhood, obviously menacing Ham.

Fuentes accordingly sent that distinguished soldier and historian, Don Carlos Coloma, with a detachment of soldiers to Brussels, with orders to bring Gomeron into camp. He was found seated at supper with his two young brothers, aged respectively sixteen and eighteen years, and was just putting a cherry into his mouth as Coloma entered the room. He remained absorbed in thought, trifling with the cherry without eating it, which Don Carlos set down as a proof of guilt. The three brothers were at once put in a coach, together with their sister, a nun of the age of twenty, and conveyed to the head-quarters of Fuentes, who lay before Le Catelet, but six leagues from Ham.

Meantime D'Orville had completed his negotiations with Bouillon, and had agreed to surrender the fortress so soon as the Spanish troops should be driven from the town. The duke knowing that there was no time to lose, came with three thousand men before the place. His summons to surrender was answered by a volley of cannon-shot from the town defences. An assault was made and repulsed, D'Humières, a most gallant officer and a favourite of King Henry, being killed, besides at least two hundred soldiers. The next attack was successful, the town was carried, and the Spanish garrison put to the sword.

D'Orville then, before giving up the citadel, demanded three hostages for the lives of his three brothers-in-law.

The hostages availed him little. Fuentes had already sent word to Gomeron's mother, that if the bargain were not fulfilled he would send her the heads of her three sons on three separate dishes. The distracted woman made her way

to D'Orville, and fell at his feet with tears and entreaties. It was too late, and D'Orville, unable to bear her lamentations, suddenly rushed from the castle, and nearly fell into the hands of the Spaniards as he fled from the scene. Two of the four cuirassiers, who alone of the whole garrison accompanied him, were taken prisoners. The governor escaped to unknown regions. Madame de Gomeron then appeared before Fuentes, and tried in vain to soften him. De Gomeron was at once beheaded in the sight of the whole camp. The two younger sons were retained in prison, but ultimately set at liberty.[19] The town and citadel were thus permanently acquired by their lawful king, who was said to be more afflicted at the death of D'Humières than rejoiced at the capture of Ham.

Meantime Colonel Verdugo, royal governor of Friesland, whose occupation in those provinces, now so nearly recovered by the republic, was gone, had led a force of six thousand foot, and twelve hundred horse across the French border, and was besieging La Ferté on the Cher. The siege was relieved by Bouillon on the 26th May, and the Spanish veteran was then ordered to take command in Burgundy. But his days were numbered. He had been sick of dysentery at Luxembourg during the summer, but after apparent recovery died suddenly on the 2nd September, and of course was supposed to have been poisoned.[20] He was identified with the whole history of the Netherland wars. Born at Talavera de la Reyna, of noble parentage, as he asserted—although his mother was said to have sold dogs' meat, and he himself when a youth was a private soldier—he rose by steady conduct and hard fighting to considerable eminence in his profession. He was governor of Harlem after the famous siege, and exerted himself with some success to mitigate the ferocity of the Spaniards towards the Netherlanders at that epoch. He was marshal-general of the camp under Don John of Austria, and distinguished himself at the

26 May, 1595.

[19] Bor, IV. 18, 19, 27. Meteren, 355, 356. De Thou, xii. 382, *seqq.* Coloma, 173.

[20] Duyck, 662. Compare Bor, IV. 29.

battle of Gemblours. He succeeded Count Renneberg as governor of Friesland and Groningen, and bore a manful part in most of the rough business that had been going on for a generation of mankind among those blood-stained wolds and morasses. He was often victorious, and quite as often soundly defeated ; but he enjoyed campaigning, and was a glutton of work. He cared little for parade and ceremony, but was fond of recalling with pleasure the days when he was a soldier at four crowns a month, with an undivided fourth of one cloak, which he and three companions wore by turns on holidays. Although accused of having attempted to procure the assassination of William Lewis Nassau, he was not considered ill-natured, and he possessed much admiration for Prince Maurice. An iron-clad man, who had scarcely taken harness from his back all his life, he was a type of the Spanish commanders who had implanted international hatred deeply in the Netherland soul, and who, now that this result and no other had been accomplished, were rapidly passing away. He had been baptised Franco, and his family appellation of Verdugo meant executioner. Punning on these names he was wont to say, that he was frank for all good people, but a hangman for heretics ; and he acted up to his gibe.[21]

Foiled at Ham, Fuentes had returned to the siege of Catelet, and had soon reduced the place. He then turned his attention again to Dourlens, and invested that city. During the preliminary operations, another veteran commander in these wars, Valentin Pardieu de la Motte, recently created Count of Everbecque by Philip, who had been for a long time general-in-chief of the artillery, and was one of the most famous and experienced officers in the Spanish service, went out one fine moonlight night to reconnoitre the enemy, and to superintend the erection of batteries. As he was usually rather careless of his personal safety, and rarely known to put on his armour when going for such purposes into the trenches, it was remarked with

[21] Coloma, 168vo.

some surprise, on this occasion, that he ordered his page to bring his accoutrements, and that he armed himself *cap-a-pie* before leaving his quarters. Nevertheless, before he had reached the redoubt, a bullet from the town struck him between the fold of his morion and the edge of his buckler and he fell dead without uttering a sound.[22]

Here again was a great loss to the king's service. La Motte, of a noble family in Burgundy, had been educated in the old fierce traditions of the Spanish system of warfare in the Netherlands, and had been one of the very hardest instruments that the despot could use for his bloody work. He had commanded a company of horse at the famous battle of St. Quintin, and since that opening event in Philip's reign he had been unceasingly engaged in the Flemish wars. Alva made him a colonel of a Walloon regiment; the grand commander Requesens appointed him governor of Gravelines. On the whole he had been tolerably faithful to his colours; having changed sides but twice. After the pacification of Ghent he swore allegiance to the States-General, and assisted in the bombardment of the citadel of that place. Soon afterwards he went over to Don John of Austria, and surrendered to him the town and fortress of Gravelines, of which he then continued governor in the name of the king. He was fortunate in the accumulation of office and of money; rather unlucky in his campaigning. He was often wounded in action, and usually defeated when commanding in chief. He lost an arm at the siege of Sluys, and had now lost his life almost by an accident. Although twice married he left no children to inherit his great estates, while the civil and military offices left vacant by his death were sufficient to satisfy the claims of five aspiring individuals. The Count of Varax succeeded him as general of artillery; but it was difficult to find a man to replace La Motte, possessing exactly the qualities which had made that warrior so valuable to his king. The type was rapidly disappearing, and most fortunately for humanity, if half the stories

[22] Bor, XII. 39. Meteren, 356. Coloma, 176.

told of him by grave chroniclers, accustomed to discriminate between history and gossip, are to be believed. He had committed more than one cool homicide. Although not rejoicing in the same patronymic as his Spanish colleague of Friesland, he too was ready on occasion to perform hangman's work. When sergeant-major in Flanders, he had himself volunteered —so ran the chronicle—to do execution on a poor wretch found guilty of professing the faith of Calvin; and, with his own hands, had prepared a fire of straw, tied his victim to the stake, and burned him to cinders.[23] Another Netherlander for the same crime of heresy had been condemned to be torn to death by horses. No one could be found to carry out the sentence. The soldiers under La Motte's command broke into mutiny rather than permit themselves to be used for such foul purposes; but the ardent young sergeant-major came forward, tied the culprit by the arms and legs to two horses, and himself whipped them to their work till it was duly accomplished.[24] Was it strange that in Philip's reign such energy should be rewarded by wealth, rank, and honour? Was not such a labourer in the vineyard worthy of his hire?

Still another eminent chieftain in the king's service disappeared at this time—one who, although unscrupulous and mischievous enough in his day, was however not stained by any suspicion of crimes like these. Count Charles Mansfeld, tired of governing his decrepit parent Peter Ernest, who, since the appointment of Fuentes, had lost all further chance of governing the Netherlands, had now left Philip's service and gone to the Turkish wars. For Amurath III., who had died in the early days of the year, had been succeeded by a sultan as warlike as himself. Mahomet III., having strangled his nineteen brothers on his accession, handsomely buried them in cypress coffins by the side of their father, and having subsequently sacked and drowned ten infant princes posthumously born to Amurath,[25] was at leisure

[23] Meteren, *ubi sup.* [24] Ibid.
[25] De Thou, XII. lib. cxiv. pp. 500, *seqq.* Compare Herrera, iii. 476, 477.

to carry the war through Transylvania and Hungary, up to the gates of Vienna, with renewed energy. The Turk, who could enforce the strenuous rules of despotism by which all secundogenitures and collateral claimants in the Ottoman family were thus provided for, was a foe to be dealt with seriously. The power of the Moslems at that day was a full match for the holy Roman Empire. The days were far distant when the grim Turk's head was to become a mockery and a show; and when a pagan empire, born of carnage and barbarism, was to be kept alive in Europe when it was ready to die, by the collective efforts of Christian princes. Charles Mansfeld had been received with great enthusiasm at the court of Rudolph, where he was created a prince of the Empire, and appointed to the chief command of the Imperial armies under the Archduke Matthias. But his warfare was over. At the siege of Gran he was stricken with sickness and removed to Comorn, where he lingered some weeks. There, on the 24th August, as he lay half-dozing on his couch, he was told that the siege was at last successful; upon which he called for a goblet of wine, drained it eagerly, and then lay resting his head on his hand, like one absorbed in thought. When they came to arouse him from his reverie they found that he was dead.[26] His father still remained superfluous in the Netherlands, hating and hated by Fuentes; but no longer able to give that governor so much annoyance as during his son's life-time the two had been able to create for Alexander Farnese. The octogenarian was past work and past mischief now; but there was one older soldier than he still left upon the stage, the grandest veteran in Philip's service, and now the last survivor, except the decrepit Peter Ernest, of the grim commanders of Alva's school. Christopher Mondragon—that miracle of human endurance, who had been an old man when the great duke arrived in the Netherlands—was still governor of Antwerp citadel, and men were to speak of him yet once more before he passed from the stage.

[26] Bor, IV. 30. Meteren, 349vo. De Thou, xii. 523.

I return from this digression to the siege of Dourlens. The death of La Motte made no difference in the plans of Fuentes. He was determined to reduce the place preparatively to more important operations. Bouillon was disposed to relieve it, and to that end had assembled a force of eight thousand men within the city of Amiens. By midsummer the Spaniards had advanced with their mines and galleries close to the walls of the city. Meantime Admiral Villars, who had gained so much renown by defending Rouen against Henry IV., and who had subsequently made such an excellent bargain with that monarch before entering his service,[27] arrived at Amiens. On the 24th July an expedition was sent from that city towards Dourlens. Bouillon and St. Pol commanded in person a force of six hundred picked cavalry. Villars and Sanseval each led half as many, and there was a supporting body of twelve hundred musketeers. This little army convoyed a train of wagons, containing ammunition and other supplies for the beleaguered town. But Fuentes, having sufficiently strengthened his works, sallied forth with two thousand infantry, and a flying squadron of Spanish horse, to intercept them. It was the eve of St. James, the patron saint of Spain, at the sound of whose name as a war-cry so many battle-fields had been won in the Netherlands, so many cities sacked, so many wholesale massacres perpetrated. Fuentes rode in the midst of his troops with the royal standard of Spain floating above him. On the other hand Villars, glittering in magnificent armour and mounted on a superbly caparisoned charger,[28] came on, with his three hundred troopers, as if about to ride a course in a tournament. The battle which ensued was one of the most bloody for the numbers engaged, and the victory one of

24 July, 1595.

[27] He had been receiving six thousand per month from the king of Spain, but on reconciling himself with Henry after the surrender of Paris, he received a sum of three hundred thousand ducats secured by estates in Normandy, and a yearly pension of thirty thousand ducats, together with the office of Admiral of France. For these considerations he had surrendered Rouen, Havre de Gran, and the castle of Pont de l'Arche. — Herrera, Hist. gen. del Mundo, iii. 423.

[28] "Muy vistoso y galan y en gallardo cavallo." Coloma, 180.

the most decisive recorded in this war. Villars charged prematurely, furiously, foolishly. He seemed jealous of Bouillon, and disposed to show the sovereign to whom he had so recently given his allegiance that an ancient Leaguer and Papist was a better soldier for his purpose than the most grizzled Huguenot in his army. On the other hand the friends of Villars accused the duke of faint-heartedness, or at least of an excessive desire to save himself and his own command. The first impetuous onset of the admiral was successful, and he drove half-a-dozen companies of Spaniards before him. But he had ventured too far from his supports. Bouillon had only intended a feint, instead of a desperate charge; the Spaniards were rallied, and the day was saved by that cool and ready soldier, Carlos Coloma. In less than an hour the French were utterly defeated and cut to pieces. Bouillon escaped to Amiens with five hundred men; this was all that was left of the expedition. The horse of Villars was shot under him and the admiral's leg was broken as he fell. He was then taken prisoner by two lieutenants of Carlos Coloma; but while these warriors were enjoying, by anticipation, the enormous ransom they should derive from so illustrious a captive, two other lieutenants in the service of Marshal de Rosnes came up and claimed their share in the prize. While the four were wrangling, the admiral called out to them in excellent Spanish not to dispute, for he had money enough to satisfy them all. Meantime the Spanish commissary-general of cavalry, Contreras, came up, rebuked this unseemly dispute before the enemy had been fairly routed, and, in order to arrange the quarrel impartially, ordered his page to despatch De Villars on the spot. The page, without a word, placed his arquebus to the admiral's forehead and shot him dead.

So perished a bold and brilliant soldier, and a most unscrupulous politician. Whether the cause of his murder was mere envy on the part of the commissary at having lost a splendid opportunity for prize-money, or hatred to an ancient Leaguer thus turned renegade, it is fruitless now to enquire.

Villars would have paid two hundred thousand crowns for his ransom, so that the assassination was bad as a mercantile speculation ; but it was pretended by the friends of Contreras that rescue was at hand. It is certain, however, that nothing was attempted by the French to redeem their total overthrow. Count Belin was wounded and fell into the hands of Coloma. Sanseval was killed ; and a long list of some of the most brilliant nobles in France was published by the Spaniards as having perished on that bloody field. This did not prevent a large number of these victims, however, from enjoying excellent health for many long years afterwards, although their deaths have been duly recorded in chronicle from that day to our own times.[29]

But Villars and Sanseval were certainly slain, and Fuentes sent their bodies, with a courteous letter, to the Duke of Nevers, at Amiens, who honoured them with a stately funeral.[30]

There was much censure cast on both Bouillon and Villars respectively by the antagonists of each chieftain ; and the contest as to the cause of the defeat was almost as animated as the skirmish itself. Bouillon was censured for grudging a victory to the Catholics, and thus leaving the admiral to his fate. Yet it is certain that the Huguenot duke himself commanded a squadron composed almost entirely of papists. Villars, on the other hand, was censured for rashness, obstinacy, and greediness for distinction ; yet it is pro-

[29] Bor, IV. 28–30. Meteren, 356, *seqq.* Coloma, 180, *seqq.* Bentivoglio, 411 412, 413. De Thou, xii. 403, *seqq.*

Count Lewis Nassau wrote to his brother John that besides the admiral (Villars), not more than three or at most four nobles of distinction perished. He also ascribes the defeat entirely to the foolhardiness of the French, who, according to his statement, charged up hill and through a narrow road, with a force of one thousand foot and three hundred cavalry, against the enemy's whole army, drawn up in battle array, and consisting of two thousand horse and ten thousand infantry, well provided with artillery. Certainly the result of such an encounter could hardly be doubtful, but Count Lewis was not in the battle, nor in France at the time, and the news received by him was probably inaccurate.

I have preferred to rely mainly on Carlos Coloma, who fought in the action, upon De Thou, and upon the Dutch chroniclers, Bor, Meteren, and others.

See Groen v. Prinsterer. (Archives II. Serie, i. 342.)

[30] Ibid.

bable that Fuentes might have been defeated had the charges of Bouillon been as determined and frequent as were those of his colleague. Savigny de Rosnes, too, the ancient Leaguer, who commanded under Fuentes, was accused of not having sufficiently followed up the victory, because unwilling that his Spanish friends should entirely trample upon his own countrymen. Yet there is no doubt whatever that De Rosnes was as bitter an enemy to his own country as the most ferocious Spaniard of them all. It has rarely been found in civil war that the man who draws his sword against his fatherland, under the banner of the foreigner, is actuated by any lingering tenderness for the nation he betrays ; and the renegade Frenchman was in truth the animating spirit of Fuentes during the whole of his brilliant campaign. The Spaniard's victories were, indeed, mainly attributable to the experience, the genius, and the rancour of De Rosnes.[31]

But debates over a lost battle are apt to be barren. Meantime Fuentes, losing no time in controversy, advanced upon the city of Dourlens, was repulsed twice, and carried it on the third assault, exactly one week after the action just recounted. The Spaniards and Leaguers, howling "Remember Ham !" butchered without mercy the garrison and all the citizens, save a small number of prisoners likely to be lucrative. Six hundred of the townspeople and two thousand five hundred French soldiers were killed within a few hours. Well had Fuentes profited by the relationship and tuition of Alva !

31 July, 1595.

The Count of Dinant and his brother De Ronsoy were both slain, and two or three hundred thousand florins were paid in ransom by those who escaped with life. The victims were all buried outside of the town in one vast trench, and the effluvia bred a fever which carried off most of the surviving inhabitants. Dourlens became for the time a desert.[32]

Fuentes now received deputies with congratulations from the obedient provinces, especially from Hainault, Artois, and Lille. He was also strongly urged to attempt the immediate

[31] De Thou, Bor, Coloma, Bentivoglio, *et al.* *Ubi supra.* [32] Ibid.

reduction of Cambray, to which end those envoys were empowered to offer contributions of four hundred and fifty thousand florins and a contingent of seven thousand infantry. Berlaymont, too, bishop of Tournay and archbishop of Cambray, was ready to advance forty thousand florins in the same cause.

Fuentes, in the highest possible spirits at his success, and having just been reinforced by Count Bucquoy with a fresh Walloon regiment of fifteen hundred foot and with eight hundred and fifty of the mutineers from Tirlemont and Chapelle, who were among the choicest of Spanish veterans, was not disposed to let the grass grow under his feet. Within four days after the sack of Dourlens he broke up his camp, and came before Cambray with an army of twelve thousand foot and nearly four thousand horse. But before narrating the further movements of the vigorous new governor-general, it is necessary to glance at the military operations in the eastern part of the Netherlands and upon the Rhine.

The States-General had reclaimed to their authority nearly all that important region lying beyond the Yssel—the solid Frisian bulwark of the republic—but there were certain points nearer the line where Upper and Nether Germany almost blend into one, which yet acknowledged the name of the king. The city of Groenlo, or Grol, not a place of much interest or importance in itself, but close to the frontier, and to that destined land of debate, the duchies of Cleves, Juliers, and Berg, still retained its Spanish garrison. On the 14th July Prince Maurice of Nassau came before the city with six thousand infantry, some companies of cavalry, and sixteen pieces of artillery. He made his approaches in form, and after a week's operations he fired three volleys, according to his custom, and summoned the place to capitulate.[33] Governor Jan van Stirum replied stoutly that he would hold the place for God and the king to the last drop of his blood. Meantime there was hope of help from the outside.

14 July, 1595.

21 July, 1595.

[33] Bor, XII. 42.

Maurice was a vigorous young commander, but there was a man to be dealt with who had been called the "good old Mondragon" when the prince was in his cradle; and who still governed the citadel of Antwerp, and was still ready for an active campaign.

Christopher Mondragon was now ninety-two years old. Not often in the world's history has a man of that age been capable of personal participation in the joys of the battle-field, whatever natural reluctance veterans are apt to manifest at relinquishing high military control.

But Mondragon looked not with envy but with admiration on the growing fame of the Nassau chieftain, and was disposed, before he himself left the stage, to match himself with the young champion.

So soon as he heard of the intended demonstration of Maurice against Grol, the ancient governor of Antwerp collected a little army by throwing together all the troops that could be spared from the various garrisons within his command. With two Spanish regiments, two thousand Swiss, the Walloon troops of De Grisons, and the Irish regiment of Stanley—in all seven thousand foot and thirteen hundred horse—Mondragon marched straight across Brabant and Gelderland to the Rhine. At Kaiserworth he reviewed his forces, and announced his intention of immediately crossing the river. There was a murmur of disapprobation among officers and men at what they considered the foolhardy scheme of mad old Mondragon. But the general had not campaigned a generation before, at the age of sixty-nine, in the bottom of the sea, and waded chin-deep for six hours long of an October night, in the face of a rising tide from the German Ocean and of an army of Zeelanders, to be frightened now at the summer aspect of the peaceful Rhine.

The wizened little old man, walking with difficulty by the aid of a staff, but armed in proof, with plumes waving gallantly from his iron headpiece, and with his rapier at his side, ordered a chair to be brought to the river's edge. Then calmly seating himself in the presence of his host, he stated

that he should not rise from that chair until the last man had crossed the river.[34] Furthermore, he observed that it was not only his purpose to relieve the city of Grol, but to bring Maurice to an action, and to defeat him, unless he retired. The soldiers ceased to murmur, the pontoons were laid, the river was passed, and on the 25th July, Maurice, hearing of the veteran's approach, and not feeling safe in his position, raised the siege of the city.[35] Burning his camp and everything that could not be taken with him on his march, the prince came in perfect order to Borkelo, two Dutch miles from Grol. Here he occupied himself for some time in clearing the country of brigands who in the guise of soldiers infested that region and made the little cities of Deutecom, Anholt, and Heerenberg unsafe. He ordered the inhabitants of these places to send out detachments to beat the bushes for his cavalry, while Hohenlo was ordered to hunt the heaths and wolds thoroughly with packs of bloodhounds until every man and beast to be found lurking in those wild regions should be extirpated. By these vigorous and cruel, but perhaps necessary, measures the brigands were at last extirpated, and honest people began to sleep in their beds.[36]

25 July, 1595.

On the 18th August Maurice took up a strong position at Bislich, not far from Wesel, where the River Lippe empties itself into the Rhine. Mondragon, with his army strengthened by reinforcements from garrisons in Gelderland, and by four hundred men brought by Frederic van den Berg from Grol, had advanced to a place called Walston in den Ham, in the neighbourhood of Wesel. The Lippe flowed between the two hostile forces. Although he had broken up his siege, the prince was not disposed to renounce his whole campaign before trying conclusions with his veteran antagonist. He accordingly arranged an ambush with much skill, by means of which he hoped to bring on a general engagement and destroy Mondragon and his little army.

18 August, 1595.

[34] Carnero, lib. xi. cap. xvi. p. 374. [35] Ibid; compare Bor, XII. 42.
[36] Bor, IV. 43.

His cousin and favourite lieutenant, Philip Nassau, was entrusted with the preliminaries. That adventurous commander, with a picked force of seven hundred cavalry, moved quietly from the camp on the evening of the 1st September. He took with him his two younger brothers, Ernest and Lewis Gunther, who, as has been seen, had received the promise of the eldest brother of the family, William Lewis, that they should be employed from time to time in any practical work that might be going forward. Besides these young gentlemen, several of the most famous English and Dutch commanders were on the expedition; the brothers Paul and Marcellus Bax, Captains Parker, Cutler, and Robert Vere, brother of Sir Francis, among the number.

1 Sept. 1595.

Early in the morning of the 2nd September the force crossed the Lippe, according to orders, keeping a pontoon across the stream to secure their retreat. They had instructions thus to feel the enemy at early dawn, and, as he was known to have foraging parties out every morning along the margin of the river, to make a sudden descent upon their pickets, and to capture those companies before they could effect their escape or be reinforced. Afterwards they were to retreat across the Lippe, followed, as it was hoped would be the case, by the troops of Mondragon, anxious to punish this piece of audacity. Meantime Maurice with five thousand infantry, the rest of his cavalry, and several pieces of artillery, awaited their coming, posted behind some hills in the neighbourhood of Wesel.

2 Sept. 1595.

The plot of the young commander was an excellent one, but the ancient campaigner on the other side of the river had not come all the way from his comfortable quarters in Antwerp to be caught napping on that September morning. Mondragon had received accurate information from his scouts as to what was going on in the enemy's camp, and as to the exact position of Maurice. He was up long before daybreak—"the good old Christopher"—and himself personally arranged a counter-ambush. In the fields lying a

little back from the immediate neighbourhood of the Lippe he posted the mass of his cavalry, supported by a well-concealed force of infantry. The pickets on the stream and the foraging companies were left to do their usual work as if nothing were likely to happen.

Philip Nassau galloped cheerfully forward, according to the well-concerted plan, sending Cutler and Marcellus Bax with a handful of troopers to pounce upon the enemy's pickets. When those officers got to the usual foraging ground they came upon a much larger cavalry force than they had looked for ; and, suspecting something wrong, dashed back again to give information to Count Philip. That impatient commander, feeling sure of his game unless this foolish delay should give the foraging companies time to escape, ordered an immediate advance with his whole cavalry force. The sheriff of Zallant was ordered to lead the way. He objected that the pass, leading through a narrow lane and opening by a gate into an open field, was impassable for more than two troopers abreast, and that the enemy was in force beyond. Philip, scorning these words of caution, and exclaiming that seventy-five lancers were enough to put fifty carabineers to rout, put on his casque, drew his sword, and sending his brother Lewis to summon Kinski and Donck, dashed into the pass, accompanied by the two counts and a couple of other nobles. The sheriff, seeing this, followed him at full gallop, and after him came the troopers of Barchon, of Du Bois, and of Paul Bax, riding single file but in much disorder. When they had all entered inextricably into the lane, with the foremost of the lancers already passing through the gate, they discovered the enemy's cavalry and infantry drawn up in force upon the watery, heathery pastures beyond. There was at once a scene of confusion. To use lances was impossible, while they were all struggling together through the narrow passage, offering themselves an easy prey to the enemy as they slowly emerged into the fields. The foremost defended themselves with sabre and pistol as well as they could. The hindmost did their best to escape, and rode for their lives to the other

side of the river. All trampled upon each other and impeded each other's movements. There was a brief engagement, bloody, desperate, hand to hand, and many Spaniards fell before the entrapped Netherlanders. But there could not be a moment's doubt as to the issue. Count Philip went down in the beginning of the action, shot through the body by an arquebus, discharged so close to him that his clothes were set on fire. As there was no water within reach the flames could be extinguished at last only by rolling him over and over, wounded as he was, among the sand and heather. Count Ernest Solms was desperately wounded at the same time. For a moment both gentlemen attempted to effect their escape by mounting on one horse, but both fell to the ground exhausted and were taken prisoners. Ernest Nassau was also captured. His young brother, Lewis Gunther, saved himself by swimming the river. Count Kinski was mortally wounded. Robert Vere, too, fell into the enemy's hands, and was afterwards murdered in cold blood. Marcellus Bax, who had returned to the field by a circuitous path, still under the delusion that he was about handsomely to cut off the retreat of the foraging companies, saved himself and a handful of cavalry by a rapid flight, so soon as he discovered the enemy drawn up in line of battle. Cutler and Parker were equally fortunate. There was less than a hundred of the States' troops killed, and it is probable that a larger number of the Spaniards fell. But the loss of Philip Nassau, despite the debauched life and somewhat reckless valour of that soldier, was a very severe one to the army and to his family. He was conveyed to Rheinberg, where his wounds were dressed. As he lay dying he was courteously visited by Mondragon, and by many other Spanish officers, anxious to pay their respects to so distinguished and warlike a member of an illustrious house. He received them with dignity, and concealed his physical agony so as to respond to their conversation as became a Nassau. His cousin, Frederic van den Berg, who was among the visitors, indecently taunted him with his position; asking him what he had expected by serving the

cause of the Beggars. Philip turned from him with impatience and bade him hold his peace. At midnight he died.

William of Orange and his three brethren had already laid down their lives for the republic, and now his eldest brother's son had died in the same cause. "He has carried the name of Nassau with honour into the grave," said his brother, Lewis William, to their father.[37] Ten others of the house, besides many collateral relations, were still in arms for their adopted country. Rarely in history has a single noble race so entirely identified itself with a nation's record in its most heroic epoch as did that of Orange-Nassau with the liberation of Holland.

Young Ernest Solms, brother of Count Everard, lay in the same chamber with Philip Nassau, and died on the following day. Their bodies were sent by Mondragon with a courteous letter to Maurice at Bisslich. Ernest Nassau was subsequently ransomed for ten thousand florins.[38]

This skirmish on the Lippe has no special significance in a military point of view, but it derives more than a passing interest, not only from the death of many a brave and distinguished soldier, but for the illustration of human vigour triumphing, both physically and mentally, over the infirmities of old age, given by the achievement of Christopher Mondragon. Alone he had planned his expedition across the country from Antwerp, alone he had insisted on crossing the Rhine, while younger soldiers hesitated ; alone, with his own active brain and busy hands, he had outwitted the famous young chieftain of the Netherlands, counteracted his subtle policy, and set the counter-ambush by which his choicest cavalry were cut to pieces, and one of his bravest generals slain. So far could the icy blood of ninety-two prevail against the vigour of twenty-eight.

The two armies lay over against each other, with the river between them, for some days longer, but it was obvious that

[37] Groen v. Prinsterer. (Archives I. 2nd series, 345.)

[38] Bor, IV. 42–44. Meteren, 361vo. Reyd, xi. 271. Coloma, 192, Carnero, xi. xvi. p. 574, *seqq.* Bentivoglio, 422, 423. Duyck, 652–659 ; are chief authorities for the incidents of this skirmish.

nothing further would be attempted on either side. Mondragon had accomplished the object for which he had marched from Brabant. He had spoiled the autumn campaign of Maurice, and was now disposed to return before winter to his own quarters. He sent a trumpet accordingly to his antagonist, begging him, half in jest, to have more consideration for his infirmities than to keep him out in his old age in such foul weather, but to allow him the military honour of being last to break up camp. Should Maurice consent to move away, Mondragon was ready to pledge himself not to pursue him, and within three days to leave his own entrenchments.

The proposition was not granted, and very soon afterwards the Spaniard, deciding to retire, crossed the Rhine on the 11th October. Maurice made a slight attempt at pursuit, sending Count William Lewis with some cavalry, who succeeded in cutting off a few wagons. The army, however, returned safely, to be dispersed into various garrisons.[39]

11 Oct. 1595.

This was Mondragon's last feat of arms. Less than three months afterwards, in Antwerp citadel, as the veteran was washing his hands previously to going to the dinner-table, he sat down and died.[40] Strange to say, this man—who had spent almost a century on the battle-field, who had been a soldier in nearly every war that had been waged in any part of Europe during that most belligerent age, who had come an old man to the Netherlands before Alva's arrival, and had ever since been constantly and personally engaged in the vast Flemish tragedy which had now lasted well nigh thirty years—had never himself lost a drop of blood. His battle-fields had been on land and water, on ice, in fire, and at the bottom of the sea, but he had never received a wound. Nay, more; he had been blown up in a fortress—the castle of Danvilliers in Luxembourg, of which he was governor—where all perished save his wife and himself,

3 Jan. 1596.

[39] Bor. Meteren. Reyd. Coloma. Carnero. Bentivoglio. Duyck. *Ubi sup.*
[40] Bor, IV. 167.

and, when they came to dig among the ruins, they excavated at last the ancient couple, protected by the framework of a window in the embrasure of which they had been seated, without a scratch or a bruise.[41] He was a Biscayan by descent, but born in Medina del Campo. A strict disciplinarian, very resolute and pertinacious, he had the good fortune to be beloved by his inferiors, his equals, and his superiors. He was called the father of his soldiers, the good Mondragon, and his name was unstained by any of those deeds of ferocity which make the chronicles of the time resemble rather the history of wolves than of men. To a married daughter, mother of several children, he left a considerable fortune.[42]

Maurice broke up his camp soon after the departure of his antagonist, and paused for a few days at Arnheim to give honourable burial to his cousin Philip and Count Solms. Meantime Sir Francis Vere was detached, with three regiments, which were to winter in Overyssel, towards Weerd castle, situate at a league's distance from Ysselsburg, and defended by a garrison of twenty-six men under Captain Pruys. That doughty commandant, on being summoned to surrender, obstinately refused. Vere, according to Maurice's orders, then opened with his artillery against the place, which soon capitulated in great panic and confusion. The captain demanded the honours of war. Vere told him in reply that the honours of war were halters for the garrison who had dared to defend such a hovel against artillery. The twenty-six were accordingly ordered to draw black and white straws. This was done, and the twelve drawing white straws were immediately hanged; the thirteenth receiving his life on consenting to act as executioner for his comrades. The commandant was despatched first of all. The rope broke, but the English soldiers held him under the water of the

[41] Bor, IV. 167. Carnero, 378, 379.

[42] Bor, IV. 167.

In the Ambras Musæum in the Imperial Belvedere palace at Vienna may still be seen a black, battered, old iron corslet of Mondragon, with many an indentation; looking plain and practical enough among the holiday suits of steel inlaid with gold, which make this collection of old armour the most remarkable in the world.

ditch until he was drowned. The castle was then thoroughly sacked, the women being sent unharmed to Ysselsburg.[43]

Maurice then shipped the remainder of his troops along the Rhine and Waal to their winter quarters and returned to the Hague. It was the feeblest year's work yet done by the stadholder.

Meantime his great ally, the Huguenot-Catholic Prince of Béarne, was making a dashing, and, on the whole, successful campaign in the heart of his own kingdom. The constable of Castile, Don Ferdinando de Velasco, one of Spain's richest grandees and poorest generals, had been sent with an army of ten thousand men to take the field in Burgundy against the man with whom the great Farnese had been measuring swords so lately, and with not unmingled success, in Picardy. Biron, with a sudden sweep, took possession of Aussone, Autun, and Beaune, but on one adventurous day found himself so deeply engaged with a superior force of the enemy in the neighbourhood of Fontaine Française, or St. Seine, where France's great river takes its rise, as to be nearly cut off and captured. But Henry himself was already in the field, and by one of those mad, reckless impulses which made him so adorable as a soldier and yet so profoundly censurable as a commander-in-chief, he flung himself, like a young lieutenant, with a mere handful of cavalry, into the midst of the fight, and at the imminent peril of his own life succeeded in rescuing the marshal and getting off again unscathed. On other occasions Henry said he had fought for victory, but on that for dear life; and, even as in the famous and foolish skirmish at Aumale three years before, it was absence of enterprise or lack of cordiality on the part of his antagonists, that alone prevented a captive king from being exhibited as a trophy of triumph for the expiring League.[44]

But the constable of Castile was not born to cheer the heart of his prudent master with such a magnificent spectacle. Velasco fell back to Gray and obstinately refused to stir from

[43] Bor, IV. 47, 131.
[44] Ibid. 52, *seqq.* De Thou, xii. 359–364, *seqq.* l. 112. Péréfixe, 191, 192

his entrenchments, while Henry before his eyes laid siege to Dijon. On the 28th June the capital of Burgundy surrendered to its sovereign, but no temptations could induce the constable to try the chance of a battle.[45] Henry's movements in the interior were more successful than were the operations nearer the frontier, but while the monarch was thus cheerfully fighting for his crown in France, his envoys were winning a still more decisive campaign for him in Rome. 28 June, 1595.

D'Ossat and Perron had accomplished their diplomatic task with consummate ability, and, notwithstanding the efforts and the threats of the Spanish ambassador and the intrigues of his master, the absolution was granted. The pope arose early on the morning of the 5th August, and walked barefoot from his palace of Mount Cavallo to the church of Maria Maggiore, with his eyes fixed on the ground, weeping loudly and praying fervently. He celebrated mass in the church, and then returned as he went, saluting no one on the road and shutting himself up in his palace afterwards. The same ceremony was performed ten days later on the festival of our Lady's Ascension. In vain, however, had been the struggle on the part of his Holiness to procure from the ambassador the deposition of the crown of France in his hands, in order that the king might receive it back again as a free gift and concession from the chief pontiff. Such a triumph was not for Rome, nor could even the publication of the Council of Trent in France be conceded except with a saving clause "as to matters which could not be put into operation without troubling the repose of the kingdom." And to obtain this clause the envoys declared "that they had been obliged to sweat blood and water." [46] 15 August, 1595.

On the 17th day of September the absolution was proclaimed with great pomp and circumstance from the gallery of St. Peter's, the holy father seated on the highest throne

[45] Bor, *ubi sup.*
[46] Letters of D'Ossat, in Bor, IV. 107, *seqq.* De Thou, xii. 468–479, l. 113.

of majesty, with his triple crown on his head, and all his cardinals and bishops about him in their most effulgent robes.[47]

The silver trumpets were blown, while artillery roared from the castle of St. Angelo, and for two successive nights Rome was in a blaze of bonfires and illumination, in a whirl of bell-ringing, feasting, and singing of hosannahs. There had not been such a merry-making in the eternal city since the pope had celebrated solemn thanksgiving for the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The king was almost beside himself with rapture when the great news reached him, and he straightway wrote letters, overflowing with gratitude and religious enthusiasm, to the pontiff and expressed his regret that military operations did not allow him to proceed at once to Rome in person to kiss the holy father's feet.[48]

The narrative returns to Fuentes, who was left before the walls of Cambray.

That venerable ecclesiastical city, pleasantly seated amid gardens, orchards, and green pastures, watered by the winding Scheld, was well fortified after the old manner, but it was especially defended and dominated by a splendid pentagonal citadel built by Charles V. It was filled with fine churches, among which the magnificent cathedral was pre-eminent, and with many other stately edifices. The population was thrifty, active, and turbulent, like that of all those Flemish and Walloon cities which the spirit of mediæval industry had warmed for a time into vehement little republics.

But, as has already been depicted in these pages, the Celtic element had been more apt to receive than consistent to retain the generous impress which had once been stamped on all the Netherlands. The Walloon provinces had fallen away from their Flemish sisters and seemed likely to accept a permanent yoke, while in the territory of the united States, as John Baptist Tassis was at that very moment

[47] Letters of D'Ossat, *ubi sup.*

[48] MS. Bethune. Bibl. Imp. No. 8967, fols. 10 and 20, cited in Capefigue, vii. 292, *seqq.* Feria to Philip, 17 Sept. 1595. Arch. de Simancas (Paris) b. 84. 20, cited by Capefigue, *ubi sup.*

pathetically observing in a private letter to Philip, "with the coming up of a new generation educated as heretics from childhood, who had never heard what the word king means, it was likely to happen at last that the king's memory being wholly forgotten nothing would remain in the land but heresy alone."[49] From this sad fate Cambray had been saved. Gavre d'Inchy had seventeen years before surrendered the city to the Duke of Alençon during that unlucky personage's brief and base career in the Netherlands, all that was left of his visit being the semi-sovereignty which the notorious Balagny had since that time enjoyed in the archiepiscopal city. This personage, a natural son of Monluc, Bishop of Valence, and nephew of the distinguished Marshal Monluc, was one of the most fortunate and the most ignoble of all the soldiers of fortune who had played their part at this epoch in the Netherlands. A poor creature himself, he had a heroine for a wife. Renée, the sister of Bussy d'Amboise, had vowed to unite herself to a man who would avenge the assassination of her brother by the Count Montsoreau.[50] Balagny readily agreed to perform the deed, and accordingly espoused the high-born dame, but it does not appear that he ever wreaked her vengeance on the murderer. He had now governed Cambray until the citizens and the whole country-side were galled and exhausted by his grinding tyranny, his inordinate pride, and his infamous extortions.[51] His latest achievement had been to force upon his subjects a copper currency bearing the nominal value of silver, with the same blasting effects which such experiments in political economy are apt to produce on princes and peoples. He had been a Royalist, a Guisist, a Leaguer, a Dutch republican, by turns, and had betrayed all the parties, at whose expense he had alternately filled his coffers. During the past year he had made up his mind—like most of the conspicuous politicians and campaigners of France—that the moribund League was only fit to be trampled upon by its recent worshippers, and he had made accordingly one of the very best bargains with

[49] Letter of Tassis, in Bor, IV. 126. [50] De Thou, xii. 414, 415. [51] Ibid.

Henry IV. that had yet been made, even at that epoch of self-vending grandees.

Henry, by treaty ratified in August, 1594, had created him Prince of Cambray and Marshal of France, so that the man who had been receiving up to that very moment a monthly subsidy of seven thousand two hundred dollars from the King of Spain was now gratified with a pension to about the same yearly amount by the King of France.[52] During the autumn Henry had visited Cambray, and the new prince had made wondrous exhibitions of loyalty to the sovereign whom he had done his best all his life to exclude from his kingdom. There had been a ceaseless round of tournaments, festivals, and masquerades[53] in the city in honour of the Huguenot chieftain, now changed into the most orthodox and most legitimate of monarchs, but it was not until midsummer of the present year that Balagny was called on to defend his old possessions and his new principality against a well-seasoned army and a vigorous commander. Meanwhile his new patron was so warmly occupied in other directions that it might be difficult for him to send assistance to the beleaguered city.

On the 14th August Fuentes began his siege operations. Before the investment had been completed the young Prince of Rhetelois, only fifteen years of age, son of the Duke of Nevers, made his entrance into the city attended by thirty of his father's archers. De Vich, too, an experienced and faithful commander, succeeded in bringing four or five hundred dragoons through the enemy's lines. These meagre reinforcements were all that reached the place; for, although the States-General sent two or three thousand Scotchmen and Zeelanders, under Justinus of Nassau, to Henry, that he might be the better enabled to relieve this

14 August, 1595.

[52] De Thou, xii. 291, *seqq.* Seventy thousand crowns a year were to be paid according to agreement by Henry IV. to Balagny, to maintain city and citadel of Cambray, by treaty made 29 Nov. 1593, but ratified in August, 1594. Besides this, Balagny received property in France equal in value to twenty thousand livres a year, to reimburse him for expenses in fortifying and defending Cambray.

The sums paid to him simultaneously by Philip II. for opposing Henry have been already mentioned.

[53] De Thou, *ubi sup.*

important frontier city, the king's movements were not sufficiently prompt to turn the force to good account. Balagny was left with a garrison of three thousand French and Walloons in the city, besides five hundred French in the fortress.

After six weeks steady drawing of parallels and digging of mines Fuentes was ready to open his batteries. On the 26th September, the news, very much exaggerated, of Mondragon's brilliant victory near Wessel, and of the deaths of Philip Nassau and Ernest Solms, reached the Spanish camp. Immense was the rejoicing. Triumphant salutes from eighty-seven cannon and many thousand muskets shook the earth and excited bewilderment and anxiety within the walls of the city. Almost immediately afterwards a tremendous cannonade was begun and so vigorously sustained that the burghers, and part of the garrison, already half rebellious with hatred to Balagny, began loudly to murmur as the balls came flying into their streets. A few days later an insurrection broke out. Three thousand citizens, with red flags flying, and armed to the teeth were discovered at daylight drawn up in the market place. Balagny came down from the citadel and endeavoured to calm the tumult, but was received with execrations. They had been promised, shouted the insurgents, that every road about Cambray was to swarm with French soldiers under their formidable king, kicking the heads of the Spaniards[54] in all directions. And what had they got? a child with thirty archers, sent by his father, and half a man at the head of four hundred dragoons.[55] To stand a siege under such circumstances against an army of fifteen thousand Spaniards, and to take Balagny's copper as if it were gold, was more than could be asked of respectable burghers.

26 Sept. 1595.

2 October, 1595.

The allusion to the young prince Rhetelois and to De Vich, who had lost a leg in the wars, was received with much enthusiasm. Balagny, appalled at the fury of the people, whom he had so long been trampling upon while their docility

[54] Colema, 195—"Su rey formidabile pisaudo las cabeças de los Españoles," &c., &c.

[55] Ibid.

lasted, shrank back before their scornful denunciations into the citadel.

But his wife was not appalled. This princess had from the beginning of the siege showed a courage and an energy worthy of her race. Night and day she had gone the rounds of the ramparts, encouraging and directing the efforts of the garrison. She had pointed batteries against the enemy's works, and, with her own hands, had fired the cannon. She now made her appearance in the market-place, after her husband had fled, and did her best to assuage the tumult, and to arouse the mutineers to a sense of duty or of shame. She plucked from her bosom whole handfuls of gold which she threw among the bystanders, and she was followed by a number of carts filled with sacks of coin ready to be exchanged for the debased currency.

Expressing contempt for the progress made by the besieging army, and for the slight impression so far produced upon the defences of the city, she snatched a pike from a soldier and offered in person to lead the garrison to the breach. Her audience knew full well that this was no theatrical display, but that the princess was ready as the boldest warrior to lead a forlorn hope or to repel the bloodiest assault. Nor, from a military point of view, was their situation desperate. But their hatred and scorn for Balagny could not be overcome by any passing sentiment of admiration for his valiant though imperious wife. No one followed her to the breach. Exclaiming that she at least would never surrender, and that she would die a sovereign princess rather than live a subject, Renée de Balagny returned to the citadel.

The town soon afterwards capitulated, and, as the Spanish soldiers, on entering, observed the slight damage that had been caused by their batteries, they were most grateful to the faint-hearted or mutinous condition by which they had been spared the expense of an assault.

Oct. 3–9, 1595. The citadel was now summoned to surrender, and Balagny agreed, in case he should not be relieved within six days, to accept what was considered honourable

terms. It proved too late to expect succour from Henry, and Balagny, but lately a reigning prince, was fain to go forth on the appointed day and salute his conqueror. But the princess kept her vow. She had done her best to defend her dominions and to live a sovereign, and now there was nothing left her but to die. With bitter reproaches on her husband's pusillanimity, with tears and sobs of rage and shame, she refused food, spurned the idea of capitulation, and expired before the 9th of October.[56]

On that day a procession moved out of the citadel gates. Balagny, with a son of eleven years of age, the Prince of Rhetelois, the Commander De Vich, and many other distinguished personages, all magnificently attired, came forth at the head of what remained of the garrison. The soldiers, numbering thirteen hundred foot and two hundred and forty horse, marched with colours flying, drums beating, bullet in mouth, and all the other recognised palliatives of military disaster. Last of all came a hearse, bearing the coffin of the Princess of Cambray. Fuentes saluted the living leaders of the procession, and the dead heroine, with stately courtesy, and ordered an escort as far as Peronne.[57]

Balagny met with a cool reception from Henry at St. Quintin, but subsequently made his peace, and espoused the sister of the king's mistress, Gabrielle d'Estrees.[58] The body of Gavre d'Inchy, which had been buried for years, was dug up and thrown into a gutter.[59]

[56] Bor, IV. 54–56. Bentivoglio, 416–421. De Thou, xii. 414–436. Coloma, 185–198, *et mult. al.*, for the siege of Cambray.

All the historians, French, Italian, Spanish, Flemish, give the same account of the conduct and death of the princess.

[57] Ibid.

[58] De Thou, *ubi sup.*

[59] Ibid.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Archduke Cardinal Albert appointed governor of the Netherlands — Return of Philip William from captivity — His adherence to the King of Spain — Notice of the Marquis of Varambon, Count Varax, and other new officers — Henry's communications with Queen Elizabeth — Madame de Monceaux — Conversation of Henry with the English ambassador — Marseilles secured by the Duke of Guise — The fort of Rysbank taken by De Rosne — Calais in the hands of the Spanish — Assistance from England solicited by Henry — Unhandsome conditions proposed by Elizabeth — Annexation of Calais to the obedient provinces — Pirates of Dunkirk — Uneasiness of the Netherlanders with regard to the designs of Elizabeth — Her protestations of sincerity — Expedition of Dutch and English forces to Spain — Attack on the Spanish war-ships — Victory of the allies — Flag of the Republic planted on the fortress of Cadiz — Capitulation of the city — Letter of Elizabeth to the Dutch Admiral — State of affairs in France — Proposition of the Duke of Montpensier for the division of the kingdom — Successes of the Cardinal Archduke in Normandy — He proceeds to Flanders — Siege and capture of Hulst — Projected alliance against Spain — Interview of De Sancy with Lord Burghley — Diplomatic conference at Greenwich — Formation of a league against Spain — Duplicity of the treaty — Affairs in Germany — Battle between the Emperor and the Grand Turk—Endeavours of Philip to counteract the influence of the league — His interference in the affairs of Germany — Secret intrigue of Henry with Spain — Philip's second attempt at the conquest of England.

ANOTHER governor-general arrived in the early days of the year 1596, to take charge of the obedient provinces. It had been rumoured for many months that Philip's choice was at last fixed upon the Archduke Cardinal Albert, Archbishop of Toledo, youngest of the three surviving brothers of the Emperor Rudolph, as the candidate for many honours. He was to espouse the Infanta, he was to govern the Netherlands, and, as it was supposed, there were wider and wilder schemes for the aggrandizement of this fortunate ecclesiastic brooding in the mind of Philip than yet had seen the light.

Meantime the cardinal's first care was to unfrock himself. He had also been obliged to lay down the most lucrative

episcopate in Christendom, that of Toledo, the revenues of which amounted to the enormous sum of three hundred thousand dollars a year.[1] Of this annual income, however, he prudently reserved to himself fifty thousand dollars, by contract with his destined successor.

The cardinal reached the Netherlands before the end of January. He brought with him three thousand Spanish infantry, and some companies of cavalry, while his personal baggage was transported on three hundred and fifty mules.[2] Of course there was a triumphal procession when, on the 11th February, the new satrap entered the obedient Netherlands, and there was the usual amount of bell-ringing, cannon-firing, trumpet-blowing, with torch-light processions, blazing tar-barrels, and bedizened platforms, where Allegory, in an advanced state of lunacy, performed its wonderful antics. It was scarcely possible for human creatures to bestow more adulation, or to abase themselves more thoroughly, than the honest citizens of Brussels had so recently done in honour of the gentle, gouty Ernest, but they did their best. That mythological conqueror and demigod had sunk into an unhonoured grave, despite the loud hosannahs sung to him on his arrival in Belgica, and the same nobles, pedants, and burghers were now ready and happy to grovel at the feet of Albert. But as it proved as impossible to surpass the glories of the holiday which had been culled out for his brother, so it would be superfluous now to recall the pageant which thus again delighted the capital.

29 Jan. 1596.

11 Feb. 1596.

But there was one personage who graced this joyous entrance whose presence excited perhaps more interest than did that of the archduke himself. The procession was headed by three grandees riding abreast. There was the Duke of Aumale, pensionary of Philip, and one of the last of the Leaguers, who had just been condemned to death and executed in effigy at Paris, as a traitor to his king and country ; there was the Prince of Chimay, now since the recent death of his

[1] Soranzo, Relazione apud Barozzi et Berchet. Le Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti, i. 45.

[2] Bor, IV. 167.

father at Venice become Duke of Arschot; and between the two rode a gentleman forty-two years of age, whose grave, melancholy features—although wearing a painful expression of habitual restraint and distrust—suggested, more than did those of the rest of his family, the physiognomy of William the Silent[3] to all who remembered that illustrious rebel.

It was the eldest son of the great founder of the Dutch republic. Philip William, Prince of Orange, had at last, after twenty-eight years of captivity in Spain, returned to the Netherlands, whence he had been kidnapped while a schoolboy at Louvain, by order of the Duke of Alva. Rarely has there been a more dreary fate, a more broken existence than his. His almost life-long confinement, not close nor cruel, but strict and inexorable, together with the devilish arts of the Jesuits, had produced nearly as blighting an effect upon his moral nature as a closer dungeon might have done on his physical constitution. Although under perpetual arrest in Madrid, he had been allowed to ride and to hunt, to go to mass, and to enjoy many of the pleasures of youth. But he had been always a prisoner, and his soul—a hopeless captive—could no longer be liberated now that the tyrant, in order to further his own secret purposes, had at last released his body from gaol. Although the eldest-born of his father, and the inheritor of the great estates of Orange and of Buren, he was no longer a Nassau except in name. The change wrought by the pressure of the Spanish atmosphere was complete. All that was left of his youthful self was a passionate reverence for his father's memory, strangely combined with a total indifference to all that his father held dear, all for which his father had laboured his whole lifetime, and for which his heart's blood had been shed. On being at last set free from bondage he had been taken to the Escorial, and permitted to kiss the hand of the king—that hand still reeking with his father's murder. He had been well received by the Infante and the Infanta, and by the empress-mother, daughter of Charles V., while the artistic treasures of the palace and

[3] Fruin, 207, note.

cloister were benignantly pointed out to him. It was also signified to him that he was to receive the order of the Golden Fleece, and to enter into possession of his paternal and maternal estates. And Philip William had accepted these conditions as if a born loyal subject of his Most Catholic Majesty.

Could better proof be wanting that in that age religion was the only fatherland, and that a true papist could sustain no injury at the hands of his Most Catholic Majesty? If to be kidnapped in boyhood, to be imprisoned during a whole generation of mankind, to be deprived of vast estates, and to be made orphan by the foulest of assassinations, could not engender resentment against the royal perpetrator of these crimes in the bosom of his victim, was it strange that Philip should deem himself something far more than man, and should placidly accept the worship rendered to him by inferior beings, as to the holy impersonation of Almighty Wrath?

Yet there is no doubt that the prince had a sincere respect for his father, and had bitterly sorrowed at his death. When a Spanish officer, playing chess with him in prison, had ventured to speak lightly of that father, Philip William had seized him bodily, thrown him from the window, and thus killed him on the spot.[4] And when on his arrival in Brussels it was suggested to him by President Richardot that it was the king's intention to reinstate him in the possession of his estates, but that a rent-charge of eighteen thousand florins a year was still to be paid from them to the heirs of Balthazar Gerard, his father's assassin, he flamed into a violent rage, drew his poniard, and would have stabbed the president, had not the bystanders forcibly inteferred.[5] In consequence of this refusal—called magnanimous by contemporary writers—to accept his property under such conditions, the estates were detained from him for a considerable time longer. During the period of his captivity he had been allowed an income of

[4] De la Pise *in voce*. The anecdote has already been mentioned in the 'Rise of the Dutch Republic.'

[5] Ibid.

fifteen thousand livres; but after his restoration his household, gentlemen, and servants alone cost him eighty thousand livres annually. It was supposed that the name of Orange-Nassau might now be of service to the king's designs in the Netherlands. Philip William had come by way of Rome, where he had been allowed to kiss the pope's feet and had received many demonstrations of favour, and it was fondly thought that he would now prove an instrument with which king and pontiff might pipe back the rebellious republic to its ancient allegiance. But the Dutchmen and Frisians were deaf. They had tasted liberty too long, they had dealt too many hard blows on the head of regal and sacerdotal despotism, to be deceived by coarse artifices. Especially the king thought that something might be done with Count Hohenlo. That turbulent personage having recently married the full sister of Philip William, and being already at variance with Count Maurice, both for military and political causes, and on account of family and pecuniary disputes, might, it was thought, be purchased by the king, and perhaps a few towns and castles in the united Netherlands might be thrown into the bargain. In that huckstering age, when the loftiest and most valiant nobles of Europe were the most shameless sellers of themselves, the most cynical mendicants for alms and the most infinite absorbers of bribes in exchange for their temporary fealty; when Mayenne, Mercœur, Guise, Villars, Egmont, and innumerable other possessors of ancient and illustrious names alternately and even simultaneously drew pensions from both sides in the great European conflict, it was not wonderful that Philip should think that the boisterous Hohenlo might be bought as well as another. The prudent king, however, gave his usual order that nothing was to be paid beforehand, but that the service was to be rendered first, and the price received afterwards.[6]

The cardinal applied himself to the task on his first arrival,

[6] "Que en todas platicas semejantes ha de preceder el servicio a la recompensa que se ofreciere a trueco de el."—Philip to Archduke Albert 13 Jan. 1596. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

but was soon obliged to report that he could make but little progress in the negotiation.[7]

The king thought, too, that Heraugière, who had commanded the memorable expedition against Breda, and who was now governor of that stronghold, might be purchased, and he accordingly instructed the cardinal to make use of the Prince of Orange in the negotiations to be made for that purpose. The cardinal, in effect, received an offer from Heraugière in the course of a few months not only to surrender Breda, without previous recompense, but likewise to place Gertruydenberg, the governor of which city was his relative, in the king's possession. But the cardinal was afraid of a trick, for Heraugière was known to be as artful as he was brave, and there can be little doubt that the Netherlander was only disposed to lay an ambush for the governor-general.[8]

And thus the son of William the Silent made his reappearance in the streets of Brussels, after twenty-eight years of imprisonment, riding in the procession of the new viceroy. The cardinal-archduke came next, with Fuentes riding at his left hand. That vigorous soldier and politician soon afterwards left the Netherlands to assume the government of Milan.

There was a correspondence between the Prince of Orange and the States-General, in which the republican authorities, after expressing themselves towards him with great propriety and affectionate respect, gave him plainly but delicately to understand that his presence at that time in the United Provinces would neither be desirable, nor, without their passports, possible.[9] They were quite aware of the uses to which the king was hoping to turn their reverence for the memory and the family of the great martyr, and were determined to foil such idle projects on the threshold.

The Archduke Albert, born on 3rd of November, 1560, was now in his thirty-sixth year. A small, thin, pale-faced

[7] Albert to Philip, 28 March, 1596. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)
[8] Albert to Philip, 18 July, 1596. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)
[9] Bor, IV. 153, 154, *seqq.*

man, with fair hair and beard, commonplace features, and the hereditary underhanging Burgundian jaw prominently developed, he was not without a certain nobility of presence. His manners were distant to haughtiness and grave to solemnity. He spoke very little and very slowly. He had resided long in Spain, where he had been a favourite with his uncle—as much as any man could be a favourite with Philip—and he had carefully formed himself on that royal model. He looked upon the King of Spain as the greatest, wisest, and best of created beings, as the most illustrious specimen of kingcraft ever yet vouchsafed to the world. He did his best to look sombre and Spanish, to turn his visage into a mask, to conceal his thoughts and emotions, not only by the expression of his features but by direct misstatements of his tongue, and in all things to present to the obedient Flemings as elaborate a reproduction of his great prototype as copy can ever recall inimitable original. Old men in the Netherlands, who remembered in how short a time Philip had succeeded, by the baleful effect of his personal presence, in lighting up a hatred which not the previous twenty years of his father's burnings, hangings, and butcherings in those provinces had been able to excite, and which forty subsequent years of bloodshed had not begun to allay, might well shake their heads when they saw this new representative of Spanish authority. It would have been wiser—so many astute politicians thought—for Albert to take the Emperor Charles for his model, who had always the power of making his tyranny acceptable to the Flemings, through the adroitness with which he seemed to be entirely a Fleming himself.[10]

But Albert, although a German, valued himself on appearing like a Spaniard. He was industrious, regular in his habits, moderate in eating and drinking, fond of giving audiences on business. He spoke German, Spanish, and Latin, and understood French and Italian. He had at times been a student, and, especially, had some knowledge of

[10] Bentivoglio, Relazione delle Provincie ubbedienti di Fiandra. Soranzo, Relazione.

mathematics. He was disposed to do his duty—so far as a man can do his duty, who imagines himself so entirely lifted above his fellow creatures as to owe no obligation except to exact their obedience and to personify to them the will of the Almighty. To Philip and the Pope he was ever faithful. He was not without pretensions to military talents, but his gravity, slowness, and silence made him fitter to shine in the cabinet than in the field. Henry IV., who loved his jest, whether at his own expense or that of friend or foe, was wont to observe that there were three things which nobody would ever believe, and which yet were very true; that Queen Elizabeth deserved her title of the throned vestal, that he was himself a good Catholic, and that Cardinal Albert was a good general. It is probable that the assertions were all equally accurate.

The new governor did not find a very able group of generals or statesmen assembled about him to assist in the difficult task which he had undertaken. There were plenty of fine gentlemen, with ancient names and lofty pretensions, but the working men in field or council had mostly disappeared. Mondragon, La Motte, Charles Mansfeld, Frank Verdugo were all dead. Fuentes was just taking his departure for Italy. Old Peter Ernest was a cipher; and his son's place was filled by the Marquis of Varambon, as principal commander in active military operations. This was a Burgundian of considerable military ability, but with an inordinate opinion of himself and of his family. "Accept the fact that his lineage is the highest possible, and that he has better connections than those of anybody else in the whole world, and he will be perfectly contented," said a sharp, splenetic Spaniard in the cardinal's confidence. "'Tis a faithful and loyal cavalier, but full of impertinences."[11] The brother of Varambon, Count Varax, had succeeded La Motte as general of artillery, and of his doings there was a tale ere

[11] Relacion de los Señores de titulo y otras personas de qualidad que hay en estos estados;—dióse a su Alt^d. en Valenciennes, 2 Abril, 1596. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

long to be told. On the whole, the best soldier in the archduke's service for the moment was the Frenchman Savigny de Rosne, an ancient Leaguer, and a passionate hater of the Béarnese, of heretics, and of France as then constituted. He had once made a contract with Henry by which he bound himself to his service ; but after occasioning a good deal of injury by his deceitful attitude, he had accepted a large amount of Spanish dollars, and had then thrown off the mask and proclaimed himself the deadliest foe of his lawful sovereign. "He was foremost," said Carlos Coloma, "among those who were successfully angled for by the Commander Moreo with golden hooks." [12] Although prodigiously fat, this renegade was an active and experienced campaigner, while his personal knowledge of his own country made his assistance of much value to those who were attempting its destruction.

The other great nobles, who were pressing themselves about the new viceroy with enthusiastic words of welcome, were as like to give him embarrassment as support. All wanted office, emoluments, distinctions, nor could much dependence be placed on the ability or the character of any of them. The new duke of Arschot had in times past, as prince of Chimay, fought against the king, and had even imagined himself a Calvinist, while his wife was still a determined heretic. It is true that she was separated from her husband. He was a man of more quickness and acuteness than his father had been, but if possible more mischievous both to friend and foe ; being subtle, restless, intriguing, fickle, ambitious, and deceitful. The Prince of Orange was considered a man of very ordinary intelligence, not more than half witted, according to Queen Elizabeth,[13] and it was probable that the peculiar circumstances of his life would extinguish any influence that he might otherwise have attained with either party. He was likely to affect a neutral position, and, in times of civil war, to be neutral is to be nothing.

[12] Coloma, 229. Calvaert's letter, in Deventer, ii. 108.
[13] "Ende niet halff wys." Caron to States-General, in Deventer, ii. 12

Arenberg, unlike the great general on the Catholic side who had made the name illustrious in the opening scenes of the mighty contest, was disposed to quiet obscurity so far as was compatible with his rank. Having inherited neither fortune nor talent with his ancient name, he was chiefly occupied with providing for the wants of his numerous family. A good papist, well-inclined and docile, he was strongly recommended for the post of admiral, not because he had naval acquirements, but because he had a great many children.[14] The Marquis of Havré, uncle to the Duke of Arschot, had played in his time many prominent parts in the long Netherland tragedy. Although older than he was when Requesens and Don John of Austria had been governors, he was not much wiser, being to the full as vociferous, as false, as insolent, as self-seeking, and as mischievous as in his youth. Alternately making appeals to popular passions in his capacity of high-born demagogue, or seeking crumbs of bounty as the supple slave of his sovereign, he was not more likely to acquire the confidence of the cardinal than he had done that of his predecessors.

The most important and opulent grandee of all the provinces was the Count de Ligne, who had become by marriage or inheritance Prince of Espinay, Seneschal of Hainault, and Viscount of Ghent. But it was only his enormous estates that gave him consideration, for he was not thought capable of either good or bad intentions. He had, however, in times past, succeeded in the chief object of his ambition, which was to keep out of trouble, and to preserve his estates from confiscation. His wife, who governed him, and had thus far guided him safely, hoped to do so to the end. The cardinal was informed that the Golden Fleece would be all-sufficient to keep him upon the right track.[15]

Of the Egmonts, one had died on the famous field of Ivry, another was an outlaw, and had been accused of participation in plots of assassination against William of Orange; the third was now about the archduke's court, and was supposed

[14] Relacion de los Señores, etc., *ubi sup.* [15] Relacion de los Señores, etc.

to be as dull a man as Ligne, but likely to be serviceable so long as he could keep his elder brother out of his inheritance. Thus devoted to Church and King were the sons of the man whose head Philip had taken off on a senseless charge of treason. The two Counts Van den Berg—Frederic and Herman—sons of the sister of William the Silent, were, on the whole, as brave, efficient, and trustworthy servants of the king and cardinal as were to be found in the obedient provinces.

The new governor had come well provided with funds, being supplied for the first three-quarters of the year with a monthly allowance of 1,100,000 florins.[16] For reasons soon to appear, it was not probable that the States-General would be able very soon to make a vigorous campaign, and it was thought best for the cardinal to turn his immediate attention to France.

The negotiations for effecting an alliance offensive and defensive, between the three powers most interested in opposing the projects of Spain for universal empire, were not yet begun, and will be reserved for a subsequent chapter. Meantime there had been much informal discussion and diplomatic trifling between France and England for the purpose of bringing about a sincere co-operation of the two crowns against the Fifth Monarchy—as it was much the fashion to denominate Philip's proposed dominion.

Henry had suggested at different times to Sir Robert Sidney, during his frequent presence in France as special envoy for the queen, the necessity of such a step, but had not always found a hearty sympathy. But as the king began to cool in his hatred to Spain, after his declaration of war against that power, it seemed desirable to Elizabeth to fan his resentment afresh, and to revert to those propositions which had been so coolly received when made. Sir Harry Umton, ambassador from her Majesty, was accordingly provided with especial letters on the subject from the queen's own hand, and presented them early in the year at

[16] Reyd, 275.

Coucy (Feb. 13, 1596). No man in the world knew better the tone to adopt in his communications with Elizabeth than did the chivalrous king. No man knew better than he how impossible it was to invent terms of adulation too gross for her to accept as spontaneous and natural effusions of the heart. He received the letters from the hands of Sir Henry, read them with rapture, heaved a deep sigh, and exclaimed: "Ah! Mr. Ambassador, what shall I say to you? This letter of the queen, my sister, is full of sweetness and affection. I see that she loves me, while that I love her is not to be doubted. Yet your commission shows me the contrary, and this proceeds from her ministers. How else can these obliquities stand with her professions of love? I am forced, as a king, to take a course which, as Henry, her loving brother, I could never adopt."

They then walked out into the park, and the king fell into frivolous discourse, on purpose to keep the envoy from the important subject which had been discussed in the cabinet. Sir Henry brought him back to business, and insisted that there was no disagreement between her Majesty and her counsellors, all being anxious to do what she wished. The envoy, who shared in the prevailing suspicions that Henry was about to make a truce with Spain, vehemently protested against such a step, complaining that his ministers, whose minds were distempered with jealousy, were inducing him to sacrifice her friendship to a false and hollow reconciliation with Spain. Henry protested that his preference would be for England's amity, but regretted that the English delays were so great, and that such dangers were ever impending over his head, as to make it impossible for him, as a king, to follow the inclinations of his heart.

They then met Madame de Monceaux, the beautiful Gabrielle, who was invited to join in the walk, the king saying that she was no meddler in politics, but of a tractable spirit.

This remark, in Sir Henry's opinion, was just, for, said he to Burghley, she is thought incapable of affairs, and very simple.

The duchess unmasked very graciously as the ambassador was presented; but, said the splenetic diplomatist, "I took no pleasure in it, nor held it any grace at all." "She was attired in a plain satin gown," he continued, "with a velvet hood to keep her from the weather, which became her very ill. In my opinion, she is altered very much for the worse, and was very grossly painted." The three walked together discoursing of trifles, much to the annoyance of Umton. At last, a shower forced the lady into the house, and the king soon afterwards took the ambassador to his cabinet. "He asked me how I liked his mistress," wrote Sir Henry to Burghley, "and I answered sparingly in her praise, and told him that if without offence I might speak it, I had the picture of a far more excellent mistress, and yet did her picture come far from the perfection of her beauty."

"As you love me," cried the king, "show it me, if you have it about you!"

"I made some difficulty," continued Sir Henry, "yet upon his importunity I offered it to his view very secretly, still holding it in my hand. He beheld it with passion and admiration, saying that I was in the right." "I give in," said the king, "Je me rends."

Then, protesting that he had never seen such beauty all his life, he kissed it reverently twice or thrice, Sir Henry still holding the miniature firmly in his hand.

The king then insisted upon seizing the picture, and there was a charming struggle between the two, ending in his Majesty's triumph. He then told Sir Henry that he might take his leave of the portrait, for he would never give it up again for any treasure, and that to possess the favour of the original he would forsake all the world. He fell into many more such passionate and incoherent expressions of rhapsody, as of one suddenly smitten and spell-bound with hapless love, bitterly reproaching the ambassador for never having brought him any answers to the many affectionate letters which he had written to the queen, whose silence had made him so wretched. Sir Henry, perhaps somewhat confounded at

being beaten at his own fantastic game, answered as well as he could, "but I found," said he, "that the dumb picture did draw on more speech and affection from him than all my best arguments and eloquence. This was the effect of our conference, and, if infiniteness of vows and outward professions be a strong argument of inward affection, there is good likelihood of the king's continuance of amity with her Majesty; only I fear lest his necessities may inconsiderately draw him into some hazardous treaty with Spain, which I hope confidently it is yet in the power of her Majesty to prevent."[17]

The king, while performing these apish tricks about the picture of a lady with beady black eyes, a hooked nose, black teeth, and a red wig, who was now in the sixty-fourth year of her age, knew very well that the whole scene would be at once repeated to the fair object of his passion by her faithful envoy; but what must have been the opinion entertained of Elizabeth by contemporary sovereigns and statesmen when such fantastic folly could be rehearsed and related every day in the year!

And the king knew, after all, and was destined very soon to acquire proof of it which there was no gainsaying, that the beautiful Elizabeth had exactly as much affection for him as he had for her, and was as capable of sacrificing his interests for her own, or of taking advantage of his direct necessities as cynically and as remorselessly, as the King of Spain, or the Duke of Mayenne, or the Pope had ever done.

Henry had made considerable progress in re-establishing his authority over a large portion of the howling wilderness to which forty years of civil war had reduced his hereditary kingdom. There was still great danger, however, at its two opposite extremities. Calais, key to the Norman gate of France, was feebly held; while Marseilles, seated in such dangerous proximity to Spain on the one side, and to the Republic of Genoa, that alert vassal of Spain, on the other, was still in the possession of the League. A concerted action

[17] Sir Henry Umton to her Majesty. Coucy, 3 Feb. 1595–6.

was undertaken by means of John Andrew Doria, with a Spanish fleet from Genoa on the outside and a well-organised conspiracy from within, to carry the city bodily over to Philip. Had it succeeded, this great Mediterranean seaport would have become as much a Spanish possession as Barcelona or Naples, and infinite might have been the damage to Henry's future prospects in consequence. But there was a man in Marseilles, Petrus Libertas by name, whose ancestors had gained this wholesome family appellation by a successful effort once made by them to rescue the little town of Calvi, in Corsica, from the tyranny of Genoa. Peter Liberty needed no prompting to vindicate, on a fitting occasion, his right to his patronymic. In conjunction with men in Marseilles who hated oppression, whether of kings, priests, or renegade republics, as much as he did, and with a secret and well-arranged understanding with the Duke of Guise, who was burning with ambition to render a signal benefit to the cause which he had just espoused, this bold tribune of the people succeeded in stirring the population to mutiny at exactly the right moment, and in opening the gates of Marseilles to the Duke of Guise and his forces before it was possible for the Leaguers to admit the fleet of Doria into its harbour. Thus was the capital of Mediterranean France lost and won.[18] Guise gained great favour in Henry's eyes, and with reason; for the son of the great Balafré, who was himself the League, had now given the League the stroke of mercy. Peter Liberty became consul of Marseilles, and received a patent of nobility. It was difficult, however, for any diploma to confer anything more noble upon him than the name which he had inherited, and to which he had so well established his right.

17 Feb. 1596.

But while Henry's cause had thus been so well served in the south, there was danger impending in the north. The king had been besieging, since autumn, the town of La Fère, an important military and strategic position, which had been Farnese's basis of operations during his memorable

[18] De Thou, xii. 613, *seqq.* l. 116. Bor, IV. 177–179.

campaigns in France, and which had ever since remained in the hands of the League.

The cardinal had taken the field with an army of fifteen thousand foot and three thousand horse, assembled at Valenciennes, and after hesitating some time whether or not he should attempt to relieve La Fère, he decided instead on a diversion. In the second week of April, De Rosne was detached at the head of four thousand men, and suddenly appeared before Calais.[19] The city had been long governed by De Gordan, but this wary and experienced commander had unfortunately been for two years dead. Still more unfortunately, it had been in his power to bequeath, not only his fortune, which was very large, but the government of Calais, considered the most valuable command in France, to his nephew, De Vidosan. He had, however, not bequeathed to him his administrative and military genius.

The fortress called the Risban, or Rysbank, which entirely governed the harbour, and the possession of which made Calais nearly impregnable, as inexhaustible supplies could thus be poured into it by sea, had fallen into comparative decay. De Gordan had been occupied in strengthening the work, but since his death the nephew had entirely neglected the task. On the land side, the bridge of Nivelet was the key to the place. The faubourg was held by two Dutch companies, under Captains Le Gros and Dominique, who undertook to prevent the entrance of the archduke's forces. Vidosan, however, ordered these faithful auxiliaries into the citadel.

De Rosne, acting with great promptness, seized both the bridge of Nivelet and the fort of Rysbank by a sudden and well-concerted movement. This having been accomplished, the city was in his power, and, after sustaining a brief cannonade, it surrendered. Vidosan, with his garrison, however, retired into the citadel, and it was agreed between himself and De Rosne that unless succour should be received from the French king before the expiration of six days, the citadel should also be evacuated. 17 April, 1596.

[19] De Thou, xii. 631.

Meantime Henry, who was at Boulogne, much disgusted at this unexpected disaster, had sent couriers to the Netherlands, demanding assistance of the States-General and of the stadholder. Maurice had speedily responded to the appeal. Proceeding himself to Zeeland, he had shipped fifteen companies of picked troops from Middelburg, together with a flotilla laden with munitions and provisions enough to withstand a siege of several weeks. When the arrangements were completed, he went himself on board of a ship of war to take command of the expedition in person.[20] On the 17th of April he arrived with his succours off the harbour of Calais, and found to his infinite disappointment that the Rysbank fort was in the hands of the enemy.[21] As not a vessel could pass the bar without almost touching that fortress, the entrance to Calais was now impossible.[22] Had the incompetent Vidosan heeded the advice of his brave Dutch officers, the place might still have been saved, for it had surrendered in a panic on the very day when the fleet of Maurice arrived off the port.

Henry had lost no time in sending, also, to his English allies for succour. The possession of Calais by the Spaniards might well seem alarming to Elizabeth, who could not well forget that up to the time of her sister this important position had been for two centuries an English stronghold. The defeat of the Spanish husband of an English queen had torn from England the last trophies of the Black Prince, and now the prize had again fallen into the hands of Spain ; but of Spain no longer in alliance, but at war, with England. Obviously it was most dangerous to the interests and to the safety of the English realm, that this threatening position, so near the gates of London, should be in the hands of the most powerful potentate in the world and the dire enemy of England. In response to Henry's appeal, the Earl of Essex was despatched with a force of six thousand men—raised by express command of the queen on Sunday when the people were all at church—to Dover, where shipping was

[20] Bor, IV. 188. [21] Ibid. [22] Ibid.

in readiness to transport the troops at once across the Channel. At the same time, the politic queen and some of her counsellors thought the opening a good one to profit by the calamity of their dear ally. Certainly it was desirable to prevent Calais from falling into the grasp of Philip. But it was perhaps equally desirable, now that the place without the assistance of Elizabeth could no longer be preserved by Henry, that Elizabeth, and not Henry, should henceforth be its possessor. To make this proposition as clear to the French king as it seemed to the English queen, Sir Robert Sidney was despatched in all haste to Boulogne, even while the guns of De Rosne were pointed at Calais citadel, and while Maurice's fleet, baffled by the cowardly surrender of the Risban, was on its retreat from the harbour.

At two o'clock in the afternoon of the 21st of April, Sidney landed at Boulogne. Henry, who had been intensely impatient to hear from England, and who suspected that the delay was boding no good to his cause, went down to the strand to meet the envoy, with whom then and there he engaged instantly in the most animated discourse. 21 April, 1596.

As there was little time to be lost, and as Sidney on getting out of the vessel found himself thus confronted with the soldier-king in person, he at once made the demand which he had been sent across the Channel to make. He requested the king to deliver up the town and citadel of Calais to the Queen of England as soon as, with her assistance, he should succeed in recovering the place. He assigned as her Majesty's reasons for this peremptory summons that she would on no other terms find it in her power to furnish the required succour. Her subjects, she said, would never consent to it except on these conditions. It was perhaps not very common with the queen to exhibit so much deference to the popular will, but on this occasion the supposed inclinations of the nation furnished her with an excellent pretext for carrying out her own. Sidney urged moreover that her Majesty felt certain of being obliged—in case she did not take Calais into her own safe

keeping and protection—to come to the rescue again within four or six months to prevent it once more from being besieged, conquered, and sacked by the enemy.

The king had feared some such proposition as this, and had intimated as much to the States' envoy, Calvaert, who had walked with him down to the strand, and had left him when the conference began. Henry was not easily thrown from his equanimity nor wont to exhibit passion on any occasion, least of all in his discussions with the ambassadors of England, but the cool and insolent egotism of this communication was too much for him.

He could never have believed, he said in reply, that after the repeated assurances of her Majesty's affection for him which he had received from the late Sir Henry Umton [23] in their recent negotiations, her Majesty would now so discourteously seek to make her profit out of his misery. He had come to Boulogne, he continued, on the pledge given by the Earl of Essex to assist him with seven or eight thousand men in the recovery of Calais. If this after all should fail him—although his own reputation would be more injured by the capture of the place thus before his eyes than if it had happened in his absence—he would rather a hundred times endure the loss of the place than have it succoured with such injurious and dishonourable conditions. After all, he said, the loss of Calais was substantially of more importance to the queen than to himself. To him the chief detriment would be in the breaking up of his easy and regular communications with his neighbours through this position, and especially with her Majesty. But as her affection for him was now proved to be so slender as to allow her to seek a profit from his misfortune and dishonour, it would be better for him to dispense with her friendship altogether and to strengthen his connections with truer and more honourable friends. Should the worst come to the worst, he doubted not that he should be able, being what he was and much more than he was of

[23] Sir Henry Umton had died in France soon after the interview with Henry IV. mentioned on a previous page of this volume. Meteren, 371.

old, to make a satisfactory arrangement with the King of Spain. He was ready to save Calais at the peril of his life, to conquer it in person, and not by the hands of any of his lieutenants; but having done so, he was not willing—at so great a loss of reputation without and at so much peril within—to deliver it to her Majesty or to any one else. He would far rather see it fall into the hands of the Spaniards.

Thus warmly and frankly did Henry denounce the unhandsome proposition made in the name of the queen, while, during his vehement expostulations, Sidney grew red with shame, and did not venture to look the king for one moment in the face.[24] He then sought to mitigate the effect of his demand by intimating, with much embarrassment of demeanour, that perhaps her Majesty would be satisfied with the possession of Calais for her own life-time, and—as this was at once plumply refused—by the suggestion of a pledge of it for the term of one year. But the king only grew the more indignant as the bargaining became more paltry, and he continued to heap bitter reproaches upon the queen, who, without having any children or known inheritor of her possessions, should nevertheless be so desirous of compassing his eternal disgrace and of exciting the discontent of his subjects for the sake of an evanescent gain for herself. At such a price, he avowed, he had no wish to purchase her Majesty's friendship.

After this explosion the conference became more amicable. The English envoy assured the king that there could be, at all events, no doubt of the arrival of Essex with eight thousand men on the following Thursday to assist in the relief of the citadel; notwithstanding the answer which he had received to the demand of her Majesty.

He furthermore expressed the strong desire which he felt that the king might be induced to make a personal visit to the queen at Dover, whither she would gladly come to receive

[24] "Deur dewelke S. M. den voors. Ambassadeur soo schaemroot maekte, dat hy (soo S. Mt my gheseyt heeft) S. M. niet in't aensicht dorste te sien," &c. &c. Calvaert's Despatch in Deventer, ii. 166.

him, so soon as Calais should have been saved. To this the king replied with gallantry, that it was one of the things in the world that he had most at heart. The envoy rejoined that her Majesty would consider such a visit a special honour and favour. She had said that she could leave this world more cheerfully, when God should ordain, after she had enjoyed two hours' conversation with his Majesty.

Sidney on taking his departure repeated the assurance that the troops under Essex would arrive before Calais by Thursday, and that they were fast marching to the English coast; forgetting, apparently, that, at the beginning of the interview, he had stated, according to the queen's instructions, that the troops had been forbidden to march until a favourable answer had been returned by the king to her proposal.

Henry then retired to his headquarters for the purpose of drawing up information for his minister in England, De Sancy, who had not yet been received by the queen, and who had been kept in complete ignorance of this mission of Sidney and of its purport.

While the king was thus occupied, the English envoy was left in the company of Calvaert, who endeavoured, without much success, to obtain from him the result of the conference which had just taken place. Sidney was not to be pumped by the Dutch diplomatist, adroit as he unquestionably was, but, so soon as the queen's ambassador was fairly afloat again on his homeward track—which was the case within three hours after his arrival at Boulogne—Calvaert received from the king a minute account of the whole conversation.[25]

Henry expressed unbounded gratitude to the States-General of the republic for their prompt and liberal assistance, and he eagerly contrasted the conduct of Prince Maurice—sailing forth in person so chivalrously to his rescue—with the sharp bargainings and shortcomings of the queen. He despatched a special messenger to convey his thanks to

[25] Calvaert's Letter of 22 April, 1596, recounting this remarkable interview, is given at length in Van Deventer's valuable publication, ii. 105–110.

the prince, and he expressed his hope to Calvaert that the States might be willing that their troops should return to the besieged place under the command of Maurice, whose presence alone, as he loudly and publicly protested, was worth four thousand men.

But it was too late. The six days were rapidly passing away. The governor of Boulogne, Campagnolo, succeeded, by Henry's command, in bringing a small reinforcement of two or three hundred men into the citadel of Calais during the night of the 22nd of April. This devoted little band made their way, when the tide was low, along the flats which stretched between the fort of Rysbank and the sea. Sometimes wading up to the neck in water, sometimes swimming for their lives, and during a greater part of their perilous march clinging so close to the hostile fortress as almost to touch its guns, the gallant adventurers succeeded in getting into the citadel in time to be butchered with the rest of the garrison on the following day. For so soon as the handful of men had gained admittance to the gates—although otherwise the aspect of affairs was quite unchanged—the rash and weak De Vidosan proclaimed that the reinforcements stipulated in his conditional capitulation having arrived, he should now resume hostilities. Whereupon he opened fire upon the town, and a sentry was killed. De Rosne, furious at what he considered a breach of faith, directed a severe cannonade against the not very formidable walls of the castle. During the artillery engagement which ensued the Prince of Orange, who had accompanied De Rosne to the siege, had a very narrow escape. A cannon-ball from the town took off the heads of two Spaniards standing near him, bespattering him with their blood and brains. He was urged to retire, but assured those about him that he came of too good a house to be afraid. His courage was commendable, but it seems not to have occurred to him that the place for his father's son was not by the side of the general who was doing the work of his father's murderer. While his brother Maurice with a fleet of twenty Dutch war-ships was attempting in vain to rescue

Calais from the grasp of the Spanish king, Philip William of Nassau was looking on, a pleased and passive spectator of the desperate and unsuccessful efforts at defence. The assault was then ordered.[26] The first storm was repulsed, mainly by the Dutch companies, who fought in the breach until most of their numbers were killed or wounded, their captains Dominique and Le Gros having both fallen. The next attack was successful, the citadel was carried, and the whole garrison, with exception of what remained of the Hollanders and Zeelanders, put to the sword. De Vidosan himself perished. Thus Calais was once more a Spanish city, and was re-annexed to the obedient provinces of Flanders. Of five thousand persons, soldiers and citizens, who had taken refuge in the castle, all were killed or reduced to captivity.[27]

The conversion of this important naval position into a Spanish-Flemish station was almost as disastrous to the republic as it was mortifying to France and dangerous to England. The neighbouring Dunkirk had long been a nest of pirates, whence small, fast-sailing vessels issued, daily and nightly, to prey indiscriminately upon the commerce of all nations. These corsairs neither gave nor took quarter, and were in the habit, after they had plundered their prizes, of setting them adrift, with the sailors nailed to the deck or chained to the rigging; while the officers were held for ransom. In case the vessels themselves were wanted, the crews were indiscriminately tossed overboard; while, on the other hand, the buccaneers rarely hesitated to blow up their own ships, when unable to escape from superior force. Capture was followed by speedy execution, and it was but recently that one of these freebooters having been brought into Rotterdam, the whole crew, forty-four in number, were hanged on the day of their arrival, while some five and twenty merchant-captains held for ransom by the pirates thus obtained their liberty.[28]

[26] Meteren, 370. De la Pise.

[27] Bor, IV. 184–188. De Thou, xii. 631–637. Meteren, 369, 370. Bentivoglio, 439, 440. Coloma, 211–217. Albert to Philip, 24 April, 1596 (Arch de Simancas MS.)

[28] Bor, IV. 50, 129. Meteren. Reyd.

And now Calais was likely to become a second and more dangerous sea-robbers' cave than even Dunkirk had been.

Notwithstanding this unlucky beginning of the campaign for the three allies, it was determined to proceed with a considerable undertaking which had been arranged between England and the republic. For the time, therefore, the importunate demands of the queen for repayments by the States of her disbursements during the past ten years were suspended. It had, indeed, never been more difficult than at that moment for the republic to furnish extraordinary sums of money. The year 1595 had not been prosperous. Although the general advance in commerce, manufactures, and in every department of national development had been very remarkable, yet there had recently been, for exceptional causes, an apparent falling off;[29] while, on the other hand, there had been a bad harvest in the north of Europe. In Holland, where no grain was grown, and which yet was the granary of the world, the prices were trebled. One hundred and eight bushels (a last) of rye, which ordinarily was worth fifty florins, now sold for one hundred and fifty florins, and other objects of consumption were equally enhanced in value.[30] On the other hand, the expenses of the war were steadily increasing, and were fixed for this year at five millions of florins. The republic, and especially the States of Holland, never hesitated to tax heroically. The commonwealth had no income except that which the several provinces chose to impose upon themselves in order to fill the quota assigned to them by the States-General; but this defect in their political organization was not sensibly felt so long as the enthusiasm for the war continued in full force. The people of the Netherlands knew full well that there was no liberty for them without fighting, no fighting without an army, no army without wages, and no wages without taxation; and although by the end of the century the imposts had become so high that, in the language of that keen observer, Cardinal Bentivoglio, nuncio at Brussels, they could scarcely be imagined higher, yet, according to the same

[29] Reyd, 300. [30] Bor, IV. 152.

authority, they were laid unflinchingly and paid by the people without a murmur.[31] During this year and the next the States of Holland, whose proportion often amounted to fifty per cent. of the whole contribution of the United Provinces, and who ever set a wholesome example in taxation, raised the duty on imports and all internal taxes by one-eighth, and laid a fresh impost on such articles of luxury as velvets and satins, pleas and processes. Starch, too, became a source of considerable revenue. With the fast-rising prosperity of the country luxury had risen likewise, and, as in all ages and countries of the world of which there is record, woman's dress signalized itself by extravagant and very often tasteless conceptions. In a country where, before the doctrine of popular sovereignty had been broached in any part of the world by the most speculative theorists, very vigorous and practical examples of democracy had been afforded to Europe; in a country where, ages before the science of political economy had been dreamed of, lessons of free trade on the largest scale had been taught to mankind by republican traders instinctively breaking in many directions through the nets by which monarchs and oligarchs, guilds and corporations, had hampered the movements of commerce; it was natural that fashion should instinctively rebel against restraint. The honest burgher's vrow of Middelburg or Enkhuyzen claimed the right to make herself as grotesque as Queen Elizabeth in all her glory. Sumptuary laws were an unwholesome part of feudal tyranny, and, as such, were naturally dropping into oblivion on the free soil of the Netherlands. It was the complaint therefore of moralists that unproductive consumption was alarmingly increasing. Formerly starch had been made of the refuse parts of corn, but now the manufacturers of that article made use of the bloom of the wheat and consumed as much of it as would have fed great cities. In the little village of Wormer the starch-makers used between three and four thousand bushels a week. Thus a substantial gentlewoman in fashionable array might bear the food of a parish

[31] Relazione delle Provincie Unite.

upon her ample bosom. A single manufacturer in Amsterdam required four hundred weekly bushels. Such was the demand for the stiffening of the vast ruffs, the wonderful head-gear, the elaborate lace-work, stomachers and streamers, without which no lady who respected herself could possibly go abroad to make her daily purchases of eggs and poultry in the market-place.

"May God preserve us," exclaimed a contemporary chronicler, unreasonably excited on the starch question, "from farther luxury and wantonness, and abuse of His blessings and good gifts, that the punishment of Jeroboam, which followed upon Solomon's fortunate reign and the gold-ships of Ophir may not come upon us."[32]

The States of Holland not confounding—as so often has been the case—the precepts of moral philosophy with those of political economy, did not, out of fear for the doom of Jeroboam, forbid the use of starch. They simply laid a tax of a stiver a pound on the commodity,[33] or about six per cent, ad valorem; and this was a more wholesome way of serving the State than by abridging the liberty of the people in the choice of personal attire. Meantime the preachers were left to thunder from their pulpits upon the sinfulness of starched ruffles and ornamental top-knots, and to threaten their fair hearers with the wrath to come, with as much success as usually attends such eloquence.

There had been uneasiness in the provinces in regard to the designs of the queen, especially since the States had expressed their inability to comply in full with her demands for repayment. Spanish emissaries had been busily circulating calumnious reports that her Majesty was on the eve of concluding a secret peace with Philip, and that it was her intention to deliver the cautionary towns to the king. The Government attached little credence to such statements, but it was natural that Envoy Caron should be anxious at their perpetual recurrence both in England and in the provinces. So, one day, he had a long conversation with the Earl of

[32] Reyd, 351. [33] Ibid.

Essex on the subject; for it will be recollected that Lord Leicester had strenuously attempted at an earlier day to get complete possession, not only of the pledged cities but of Leyden also, in order to control the whole country. Essex was aflame with indignation at once, and expressed himself with his customary recklessness. He swore that if her Majesty were so far forsaken of God and so forgetful of her own glory, as through evil counsel to think of making any treaty with Spain without the knowledge of the States-General and in order to cheat them, he would himself make the matter as public as it was possible to do, and would place himself in direct opposition to such a measure, so as to show the whole world that his heart and soul were foreign at least to any vile counsel of the kind that might have been given to his Sovereign.[34] Caron and Essex conversed much in this vein, and although the envoy especially requested him not to do so, the earl, who was not distinguished for his powers of dissimulation, and who suspected Burleigh of again tampering, as he had often before tampered, with secret agents of Philip, went straight to the queen with the story. Next day, Essex invited Caron to dine and to go with him after dinner to the queen. This was done, and, so soon as the States' envoy was admitted to the royal presence, her Majesty at once opened the subject. She had heard, she said, that the reports in question had been spread through the provinces, and she expressed much indignation in regard to them. She swore very vehemently, as usual, and protested that she had better never have been born than prove so miserable a princess as these tales would make her. The histories of England, she said, should never describe her as guilty of such falsehood. She could find a more honourable and fitting means of making peace than by delivering up cities and strongholds so sincerely and confidingly placed in her hands. She hoped to restore them as faithfully as they had loyally been entrusted to her keeping. She begged Caron to acquaint the States-General with these asseverations; declaring that never since she had

[34] Letter of Caron, 3 Dec. 1595, *apud* Bor, IV. 150, 151.

sent troops to the Netherlands had she lent her ear to those who had made such underhand propositions. She was aware that Cardinal Albert had propositions to make, and that he was desirous of inducing both the French king and herself to consent to a peace with Spain: but she promised the States' envoy solemnly before God to apprise him of any such overtures, so soon as they should be made known to herself.[35]

Much more in this strain, with her usual vehemence and mighty oaths, did the great queen aver, and the republican envoy, to whom she was on this occasion very gracious, was fain to believe in her sincerity. Yet the remembrance of the amazing negotiations between the queen's ministers and the agents of Alexander Farnese, by which the invasion of the Armada had been masked, could not but have left an uneasy feeling in the mind of every Dutch statesman. "I trust in God," said Caron, "that He may never so abandon her as to permit her to do the reverse of what she now protests with so much passion. Should it be otherwise—which God forbid—I should think that He would send such chastisement upon her and her people that other princes would see their fate therein as in a mirror, should they make and break such oaths and promises. I tell you these things as they occur, because, as I often feel uneasiness myself, I imagine that my friends on the other side the water may be subject to the same anxiety. Nevertheless, beat the bush as I may, I can obtain no better information than this which I am now sending you."[36]

It had been agreed that for a time the queen should desist from her demands for repayment—which, according to the Treaty of 1585, was to be made only after conclusion of peace between Spain and the provinces, but which Elizabeth was frequently urging on the ground that the States could now make that peace when they chose—and in return for such remission the republic promised to furnish twenty-four ships of war and four tenders for a naval expedition which was now projected against the Spanish coast. These war-ships were to

[35] Letter of Caron, *ubi sup.* [36] Ibid.

be of four hundred, three hundred, and two hundred tons—eight of each dimension—and the estimated expense of their fitting out for five months was 512,796 florins.[37]

Before the end of April, notwithstanding the disappointment occasioned in the Netherlands by the loss of Calais, which the States had so energetically striven to prevent, the fleet under Admiral John of Duvenwoord, Seigneur of Warmond, and Vice-Admirals Jan Gerbrantz and Cornelius Leusen, had arrived at Plymouth, ready to sail with their English allies.[38] There were three thousand sailors of Holland and Zeeland on board, the best mariners in the world, and two thousand two hundred picked veterans from the garrisons of the Netherlands.[39] These land-troops were English, but they belonged to the States' army, which was composed of Dutch, German, Walloon, Scotch, and Irish soldiers, and it was a liberal concession on the part of the republican Government to allow them to serve on the present expedition. By the terms of the treaty the queen had no more power to send these companies to invade Spain than to campaign against Tyr Owen in Ireland, while at a moment when the cardinal archduke had a stronger and better-appointed army in Flanders than had been seen for many years in the provinces, it was a most hazardous experiment for the States to send so considerable a portion of their land and naval forces upon a distant adventure. It was also a serious blow to them to be deprived for the whole season of that valiant and experienced commander, Sir Francis Vere, the most valuable lieutenant, save Lewis William, that Maurice had at his disposition. Yet Vere was to take command of this contingent thus sent to the coast of Spain, at the very moment when the republican army ought to issue from their winter quarters and begin active operations in the field. The consequence of this diminution of their strength and drain upon their resources was that the States were unable to put an army in the field during the current year, or make any attempt at a campaign.

[37] Bor, IV. 148, 182. [38] Ibid. 191. [39] Ibid.

The queen wrote a warm letter of thanks to Admiral Warmond for the promptness and efficiency with which he had brought his fleet to the place of rendezvous, and now all was bustle and preparation in the English ports for the exciting expedition resolved upon. Never during Philip's life-time, nor for several years before his birth, had a hostile foot trod the soil of Spain, except during the brief landing at Corunna in 1590, and, although the king's beard had been well singed ten years previously by Sir Francis Drake, and although the coast of Portugal had still more recently been invaded by Essex and Vere, yet the present adventure was on a larger scale, and held out brighter prospects of success than any preceding expedition had done. In an age when the line between the land and sea service, between regular campaigners and volunteers, between public and private warfare, between chivalrous knights-errant and buccaneers, was not very distinctly drawn, there could be nothing more exciting to adventurous spirits, more tempting to the imagination of those who hated the Pope and Philip, who loved fighting, prize-money, and the queen, than a foray into Spain.

It was time to return the visit of the Armada. Some of the sea-kings were gone. Those magnificent freebooters, Drake and Hawkins, had just died in the West Indies, and doughty Sir Roger Williams had left the world in which he had bustled so effectively, bequeathing to posterity a classic memorial of near a half century of hard fighting, written, one might almost imagine, in his demi-pique saddle. But that most genial, valiant, impracticable, reckless, fascinating hero of romance, the Earl of Essex—still a youth although a veteran in service—was in the spring-tide of favour and glory, and was to command the land-forces now assembled at Plymouth. That other corsair[40]—as the Spaniards called him—that other charming and heroic shape in England's chequered chronicle of chivalry and crime—famous in arts and arms, politics, science, literature, endowed with so many of the gifts

[40] "Otro corsario llamado *Guateral*," says the historian Herrera, ingeniously fusing into one the Christian and family names of Sir Walter Raleigh, iii. 585.

by which men confer lustre on their age and country, whose name was already a part of England's eternal glory, whose tragic destiny was to be her undying shame—Raleigh, the soldier, sailor, scholar, statesman, poet, historian, geographical discoverer, planter of empires yet unborn—was also present, helping to organize the somewhat chaotic elements of which the chief Anglo-Dutch enterprise for this year against the Spanish world-dominion was compounded.

And, again, it is not superfluous to recal the comparatively slender materials, both in bulk and numbers, over which the vivid intelligence and restless energy of the two leading Protestant powers, the Kingdom and the Republic, disposed. Their contest against the overshadowing empire, which was so obstinately striving to become the fifth-monarchy of history, was waged by land and naval forces, which in their aggregate numbers would scarce make a startling list of killed and wounded in a single modern battle ; by ships such that a whole fleet of them might be swept out of existence with half-a-dozen modern broadsides ; by weapons which would seem to modern eyes like clumsy toys for children. Such was the machinery by which the world was to be lost and won, less than three centuries ago. Could science, which even in that age had made gigantic strides out of the preceding darkness, have revealed its later miracles, and have presented its terrible powers to the despotism which was seeking to crush all Christendom beneath its feet, the possible result might have been most tragical to humanity. While there are few inventions in morals, the demon Intellect is ever at his work, knowing no fatigue and scorning contentment in his restless demands upon the infinite Unknown. Yet moral truth remains unchanged, gradually through the ages extending its influence, and it is only by conformity to its simple and eternal dictates that nations, like individuals, can preserve a healthful existence. In the unending warfare between right and wrong, between liberty and despotism, Evil has the advantage of rapidly assuming many shapes. It has been well said that constant vigilance is the price of liberty. The tendency of

our own times, stimulated by scientific discoveries and their practical application, is to political consolidation, to the absorption of lesser communities in greater, just as disintegration was the leading characteristic of the darker ages. The scheme of Charlemagne to organize Europe into a single despotism was a brilliant failure because the forces which were driving human society into local and gradual reconstruction around various centres of crystallization were irresistible to any countervailing enginry which the emperor had at his disposal. The attempt of Philip, eight centuries later, at universal monarchy, was frivolous, although he could dispose of material agencies which in the hands of Charlemagne might have made the dreams of Charlemagne possible. It was frivolous because the rising instinct of the age was for religious, political, and commercial freedom in a far intenser degree than those who lived in that age were themselves aware. A considerable republic had been evolved as it were involuntarily out of the necessities of the time almost without self-consciousness that it was a republic, and even against the desire of many who were guiding its destinies. And it found itself in constant combination with two monarchs, despotic at heart and of enigmatical or indifferent religious convictions, who yet reigned over peoples largely influenced by enthusiasm for freedom. Thus liberty was preserved for the world; but, as the law of human progress would seem to be ever by a spiral movement, it seems strange to the superficial observer not prone to generalizing, that Calvinism, which unquestionably was the hard receptacle in which the germ of human freedom was preserved in various countries and at different epochs, should have so often degenerated into tyranny. Yet notwithstanding the burning of Servetus at Geneva, and the hanging of Mary Dyer at Boston, it is certain that France, England, the Netherlands, and America, owe a large share of such political liberty as they have enjoyed to Calvinism. It may be possible for large masses of humanity to accept for ages the idea of one infallible Church, however tyrannical: but the idea once

admitted that there may be many churches; that what is called the State can be separated from what is called the Church; the plea of infallibility and of authority soon becomes ridiculous—a mere fiction of political or fashionable quackery to impose upon the uneducated or the unreflecting.

And now Essex, Raleigh and Howard, Vere, Warmond and Nassau were about to invade the shores of the despot who sat in his study plotting to annex England, Scotland, Ireland, France, the Dutch republic, and the German empire to the realms of Spain, Portugal, Naples, Milan, and the Eastern and Western Indies, over which he already reigned.

The fleet consisted of fifty-seven ships of war, of which twenty-four were Dutch vessels under Admiral Warmond, with three thousand sailors of Holland and Zeeland. Besides the sailors, there was a force of six thousand foot soldiers, including the English veterans from the Netherlands under Sir Francis Vere. There were also fifty transports laden with ammunition and stores. The expedition was under the joint command of Lord High Admiral Howard and of the Earl of Essex. Many noble and knightly volunteers, both from England and the republic, were on board, including, besides those already mentioned, Lord Thomas Howard, son of the Duke of Norfolk, Sir John Wingfield, who had commanded at Gertruydenburg, when it had been so treacherously surrendered to Farnese; Count Lewis Gunther of Nassau, who had so recently escaped from the disastrous fight with Mondragon in the Lippe, and was now continuing his education according to the plan laid down for him by his elder brother Lewis William; Nicolas Meetkerk, Peter Regesmortes, Don Christopher of Portugal, son of Don Antonio, and a host of other adventurers.

13 Jan. 1596.

On the last day of June the expedition arrived off Cadiz. Next morning they found a splendid Spanish fleet in the harbour of that city, including four of the famous apostolic great galleons, St. Philip, St. Matthew, St. Thomas, and St. Andrew, with twenty or thirty great war-ships besides, and fifty-seven well-armed Indiamen, which were to be convoyed

on their outward voyage, with a cargo estimated at twelve millions of ducats.

The St. Philip was the phenomenon of naval architecture of that day, larger and stronger than any ship before known. She was two thousand tons burthen, carried eighty-two bronze cannon, and had a crew of twelve hundred men. The other three apostles carried each fifty guns and four hundred men. The armament of the other war-ships varied from fifty-two to eighteen guns each. The presence of such a formidable force might have seemed a motive for discouragement, or at least of caution. On the contrary, the adventurers dashed at once upon their prey; thus finding a larger booty than they had dared to expect. There was but a brief engagement. At the outset a Dutch ship accidentally blew up, and gave much encouragement to the Spaniards. Their joy was but short-lived. Two of the great galleons were soon captured, the other two, the St. Philip and the St. Thomas, were run aground and burned. The rest of the war-ships were driven within the harbour, but were unable to prevent a landing of the enemy's forces. In the eagerness of the allies to seize the city, they unluckily allowed many of the Indiamen to effect their escape through the *puente del Zuazzo*, which had not been supposed a navigable passage for ships of such burthen. Nine hundred soldiers under Essex, and four hundred noble volunteers under Lewis Gunther of Nassau, now sprang on shore, and drove some eleven hundred Spanish skirmishers back within the gates of the city, or into a bastion recently raised to fortify the point when the troops had landed. Young Nassau stormed the bulwark sword in hand, carried it at the first assault, and planted his colours on its battlement. It was the flag of William the Silent; for the republican banner was composed of the family colours of the founder of the new commonwealth.[41] The blazonry of the proscribed and assassinated rebel waved at last defiantly over one of the chief cities of Spain. Essex and Nassau and all the rest

1 July, 1596.

[41] Fruin, 357.

then entered the city. There was little fighting. Twenty-five English and Hollanders were killed, and about as many Spaniards. Essex knighted about fifty gentlemen, Englishmen and Hollanders, in the square of Cadiz for their gallantry. Among the number were Lewis Gunther of Nassau, Admiral Warmond, and Peter Regesmortes. Colonel Nicolas Meetkerke* was killed in the brief action, and Sir John Wingfield, who insisted in prancing about on horseback without his armour, defying the townspeople and neglecting the urgent appeal of Sir Francis Vere, was also slain. The Spanish soldiers, discouraged by the defeat of the ships on which they had relied for protection of the town, retreated with a great portion of the inhabitants into the citadel. Next morning the citadel capitulated without striking a blow, although there were six thousand able-bodied, well-armed men within its walls. It was one of the most astonishing panics ever recorded. The great fleet, making a third of the king's navy, the city of Cadiz and its fortress, were surrendered to this audacious little force, which had only arrived off the harbour thirty-six hours before. The invaders had, however, committed a great mistake. They had routed, and, as it were, captured the Spanish galleons, but they had not taken possession of them, such had been their eagerness to enter the city. It was now agreed that the fleet should be ransomed for two million ducats, but the proud Duke of Medina Sidonia, who had already witnessed the destruction of one mighty armada, preferred that these splendid ships too should perish rather than that they should pay tribute to the enemy. Scorning the capitulation of the commandant of the citadel, he ordered the fleet to be set on fire. Thirty-two ships, most of them vessels of war of the highest class, were burned, with all their equipments. Twelve hundred cannon sunk at once to the bottom of the Bay of Cadiz, besides arms for five or six thousand men. At least one-third of Philip's effective navy was thus destroyed.

2 July.

The victors now sacked the city very thoroughly, but the results were disappointing. A large portion of the portable

wealth of the inhabitants, their gold and their jewelry, had been so cunningly concealed that, although half a dozen persons were tortured till they should reveal hidden treasures, not more than five hundred thousand ducats worth of plunder was obtained. Another sum of equal amount having been levied upon the citizens; forty notable personages, among them eighteen ecclesiastical dignitaries, were carried off as hostages for its payment. The city was now set on fire by command of Essex in four different quarters. Especially the cathedral and other churches, the convents and the hospitals, were burned. It was perhaps not unnatural that both Englishmen and Hollanders should be disposed to wreak a barbarous vengeance on everything representative of the Church which they abhorred, and from which such endless misery had issued to the uttermost corners of their own countries. But it is at any rate refreshing to record amid these acts of pillage and destruction, in which, as must ever be the case, the innocent and the lowly were made to suffer for the crimes of crowned and mitred culprits, that not many special acts of cruelty were committed upon individuals. No man was murdered in cold blood, no woman was outraged.[42] The beautiful city was left a desolate and blackened ruin, and a general levy of spoil was made for the benefit of the victors, but there was no infringement of the theory and practice of the laws of war as understood in that day or in later ages. It is even recorded that Essex ordered one of his soldiers, who was found stealing a woman's gown, to be hanged on the spot, but that, wearied by the intercession of an ecclesiastic of Cadiz, the canon Quesada, he consented at last to pardon the marauder.[43]

It was the earnest desire of Essex to hold Cadiz instead of destroying it. With three thousand men, and with temporary supplies from the fleet, the place could be maintained against

[42] This is the express testimony of the Spanish historian Herrera, whose evidence will hardly be disputed. Herrera, iii. 645.

[43] The chief authorities consulted for this expedition are Bor, IV. 232–235. Meteren, 374–377. Reyd, 278–281. Herrera, iii. 632–645. De Thou, xii. 671–674, l. 116. Camden, 517–523. Fruin, 353–360.

all comers ; Holland and England together commanding the seas. Admiral Warmond and all the Netherlanders seconded the scheme, and offered at once to put ashore from their vessels food and munitions enough to serve two thousand men for two months. If the English admiral would do as much, the place might be afterwards supplied without limit and held till doomsday, a perpetual thorn in Philip's side. Sir Francis Vere was likewise warmly in favour of the project, but he stood alone. All the other Englishmen opposed it as hazardous, extravagant, and in direct contravention of the minute instructions of the queen. With a sigh or a curse for what he considered the superfluous caution of his royal mistress, and the exaggerated docility of Lord High Admiral Howard, Essex was fain to content himself with the sack and the conflagration, and the allied fleet sailed away from Cadiz.

On their way towards Lisbon they anchored off Faro, and landed a force, chiefly of Netherlanders, who expeditiously burned and plundered the place. When they reached the neighbourhood of Lisbon, they received information that a great fleet of Indiamen, richly laden, were daily expected from the Flemish islands, as the Azores were then denominated. Again Essex was vehemently disposed to steer at once for that station, in order to grasp so tempting a prize ; again he was strenuously supported by the Dutch admiral and Vere, and again Lord Howard peremptorily interdicted the plan. It was contrary to his instructions and to his ideas of duty, he said, to risk so valuable a portion of her Majesty's fleet on so doubtful a venture. His ships were not fitted for a winter's cruise, he urged. Thus, although it was the very heart of midsummer, the fleet was ordered to sail homeward. The usual result of a divided command was made manifest, and it proved in the sequel that, had they sailed for the islands, they would have pounced at exactly the right moment upon an unprotected fleet of merchantmen, with cargoes valued at seven millions of ducats. Essex, not being willing to undertake the foray to the Azores with

the Dutch ships alone, was obliged to digest his spleen as best he could. Meantime the English fleet bore away for England, leaving Essex in his own ship, together with the two captured Spanish galleons, to his fate. That fate might have been a disastrous one, for his prizes were not fully manned, his own vessel was far from powerful, and there were many rovers and cruisers upon the seas. The Dutch admiral, with all his ships, however, remained in company, and safely convoyed him to Plymouth, where they arrived only a day or two later than Howard and his fleet.[44] Warmond, who had been disposed to sail up the Thames in order to pay his respects to the queen, was informed that his presence would not be desirable but rather an embarrassment. He, however, received the following letter from the hand of Elizabeth. 14 Aug. 1596.

"Monsieur Duvenwoord,—The report made to me by the generals of our fleet, just happily arrived from the coast of Spain, of the devoirs of those who have been partakers in so famous a victory, ascribes so much of it to the valour, skill, and readiness exhibited by yourself and our other friends from the Netherlands under your command, during the whole course of the expedition, as to fill our mind with special joy and satisfaction, and with a desire to impart these feelings to you. No other means presenting themselves at this moment than that of a letter (in some sense darkening the picture of the conceptions of our soul), we are willing to make use of it while waiting for means more effectual. Wishing thus to disburthen ourselves we find ourselves confused, not knowing where to begin, the greatness of each part exceeding the merit of the other. For, the vigour and promptness with which my lords the States-General stepped into the enterprise, made us acknowledge that the good favour, which we have always borne the United Provinces and the proofs thereof which we have given in the benefits conferred by us upon them, had not been ill-bestowed. The valour, skill,

[44] Bor, Meteren, Reyd, De Thou, *ubi sup.*

and discipline manifested by you in this enterprise show that you and your whole nation are worthy the favour and protection of princes against those who wish to tyrannize over you. But the honourableness and the valour shown by you, Sir Admiral, towards our cousin the Earl of Essex on his return, when he unfortunately was cut off from the fleet, and deep in the night was deprived of all support, when you kept company with him and gave him escort into the harbour of Plymouth, demonstrate on the one hand your foresight in providing thus by your pains and patience against all disasters, which through an accident falling upon one of the chiefs of our armada might have darkened the great victory; and on the other hand the fervour and fire of the affection which you bear us, increasing thus, through a double bond, the obligations we are owing you, which is so great in our hearts that we have felt bound to discharge a part of it by means of this writing, which we beg you to communicate to the whole company of our friends under your command; saying to them besides, that they may feel assured that even as we have before given proof of our goodwill to their fatherland, so henceforth—incited by their devoirs and merits—we are ready to extend our bounty and affection in all ways which may become a princess recompensing the virtues and gratitude of a nation so worthy as yours.

"ELIZABETH R.

"14*th August*, 1596." [45]

This letter was transmitted by the admiral to the States-General, who furnished him with a copy of it, but enrolled the original in their archives; recording as it did, in the hand

[45] The letter, translated of course into Flemish, is given in full by Bor, IV. 235. Incredible as it may seem, Camden not only makes no allusion to this special and memorable service of the Dutch Admiral, and to the enthusiastic approbation bestowed upon him and his comrades by the queen, but he never once mentions him in his account, save that towards the end of a list of persons knighted after the taking of the city the name of John van Duvenvord appears. The English historian, indeed, carefully suppresses the share taken by the sailors and soldiers of the Dutch republic in the expedition; scarcely the faintest allusion being made to them from the beginning to the end of his narrative. The whole affair is represented as a purely English adventure and English triumph.

of the great English queen, so striking a testimony to the valour and the good conduct of Netherlanders.[46]

The results of this expedition were considerable, for the king's navy was crippled, a great city was destroyed, and some millions of plunder had been obtained. But the permanent possession of Cadiz, which, in such case, Essex hoped to exchange for Calais, and the destruction of the fleet at the Azores—possible achievements both, and unwisely neglected—would have been far more profitable, at least to England. It was also matter of deep regret that there was much quarrelling between the Netherlanders and the Englishmen as to their respective share of the spoils; the Netherlanders complaining loudly that they had been defrauded. Moreover the merchants of Middelburg, Amsterdam, and other commercial cities of Holland and Zeeland were, as it proved, the real owners of a large portion of the property destroyed or pillaged at Cadiz; so that a loss estimated as high as three hundred thousand florins fell upon those unfortunate traders through this triumph of the allies.[47]

The internal consequences of the fall of Calais had threatened at the first moment to be as disastrous as the international results of that misfortune had already proved. The hour for the definite dismemberment and partition of the French kingdom, not by foreign conquerors but among its own self-seeking and disloyal grandees, seemed to have struck. The indomitable Henry, ever most buoyant when most pressed by misfortune, was on the way to his camp at La Fère, encouraging the faint-hearted, and providing as well as he could for the safety of the places most menaced, when he was met at St. Quentin by a solemn deputation of the principal nobles, military commanders, and provincial governors of France. The Duke of Montpensier was spokesman of the assembly, and, in an harangue carefully prepared for the occasion, made an elaborate proposition to the king that the provinces, districts, cities, castles, and other strongholds throughout the kingdom should now be formally

[46] Bor, *ubi sup.* [47] Bor, Meteren, Reyd, *ubi sup.*

bestowed upon the actual governors and commandants thereof in perpetuity and as hereditary property, on condition of rendering a certain military service to the king and his descendants. It seemed so amazing that this temporary disaster to the national arms should be used as a pretext for parcelling out France, and converting a great empire into a number of insignificant duchies and petty principalities; that this movement should be made, not by the partisans of Spain, but by the adherents of the king; and that its leader should be his own near relative, a prince of the blood, and a possible successor to the crown, that Henry was struck absolutely dumb. Misinterpreting his silence, the duke proceeded very confidently with his well-conned harangue; and was eloquently demonstrating that, under such a system, Henry, as principal feudal chief, would have greater military forces at his disposal whenever he chose to summon his faithful vassals to the field than could be the case while the mere shadow of royal power or dignity was allowed to remain; when the king, finding at last a tongue, rebuked his cousin, not angrily, but with a grave melancholy which was more impressive than wrath.

He expressed his pity for the duke that designing intriguers should have thus taken advantage of his facility of character to cause him to enact a part so entirely unworthy a Frenchman, a gentleman, and a prince of the blood. He had himself, at the outset of his career, been much farther from the throne than Montpensier was at that moment; but at no period of his life would he have consented to disgrace himself by attempting the dismemberment of the realm. So far from entering for a moment into the subject-matter of the duke's discourse, he gave him and all his colleagues distinctly to understand that he would rather die a thousand deaths than listen to suggestions which would cover his family and the royal dignity with infamy.[48]

Rarely has political cynicism been displayed in more

[48] Sully, Memoirs, t. i. lib. vii. pp. 417, 418. Compare De Thou, t. xiii. lib. cxviii. p. 136.

revolting shape than in this deliberate demonstration by the leading patricians and generals of France, to whom patriotism seemed an unimaginable idea. Thus signally was their greediness to convert a national disaster into personal profit rebuked by the king. Henry was no respecter of the People, which he regarded as something immeasurably below his feet. On the contrary, he was the most sublime self-seeker of them all; but his courage, his intelligent ambition, his breadth and strength of purpose, never permitted him to doubt that his own greatness was inseparable from the greatness of France. Thus he represented a distinct and wholesome principle—the national integrity of a great homogeneous people at a period when that integrity seemed, through domestic treason and foreign hatred, to be hopelessly lost. Hence it is not unnatural that he should hold his place in the national chronicle as Henry the Great.

Meantime, while the military events just recorded had been occurring in the southern peninsula, the progress of the archduke and his lieutenants in the north against the king and against the republic had been gratifying to the ambition of that martial ecclesiastic. Soon after the fall of Calais, De Rosne had seized the castles of Guynes and Hames, 22–23 May, 1596. while De Mexia laid siege to the important stronghold of Ardres. The garrison, commanded by Count Belin, was sufficiently numerous and well supplied to maintain the place until Henry, whose triumph at La Fère could hardly be much longer delayed, should come to its relief. To the king's infinite dissatisfaction, however, precisely as Don Alvario de Osorio was surrendering La Fère to him, after a seven months' siege, Ardres was capitulating to De Mexia. The reproaches upon Belin for cowardice, imbecility, and bad faith, were bitter and general. All his officers had vehemently protested against the surrender, and Henry at first talked of cutting off his head.[49] It was hardly probable, however—had the surrender been really the result of treachery—that the governor would have put himself, as he did at once,

[49] So Justinus of Nassau wrote to Prince Maurice. Bor, IV. 194.

in the king's power ; for the garrison marched out of Ardres with the commandant at their head, banners displayed, drums beating, matches lighted and bullet in mouth, twelve hundred fighting men strong, besides invalids. Belin was possessed of too much influence, and had the means of rendering too many pieces of service to the politic king, whose rancour against Spain was perhaps not really so intense as was commonly supposed, to meet with the condign punishment which might have been the fate of humbler knaves.

These successes having been obtained in Normandy, the cardinal with a force of nearly fifteen thousand men now took the field in Flanders ; and, after hesitating for a time whether he should attack Breda, Bergen, Ostend, or Gertruydenburg,—and after making occasional feints in various directions,—came, towards the end of June, before Hulst. This rather insignificant place, with a population of but one thousand inhabitants, was defended by a strong garrison under command of that eminent and experienced officer Count Everard Solms. Its defences were made more complete by a system of sluices, through which the country around could be laid under water ; and Maurice, whose capture of the town in the year 1591 had been one of his earliest military achievements, was disposed to hold it at all hazards. He came in person to inspect the fortifications, and appeared to be so eager on the subject, and so likely to encounter unnecessary hazards, that the States of Holland passed a resolution imploring him "that he would not, in his heroic enthusiasm and laudable personal service, expose a life on which the country so much depended to manifest dangers."[50] The place was soon thoroughly invested, and the usual series of minings and counter-minings, assaults, and sorties followed, in the course of which that courageous and corpulent renegade, De Rosne, had his head taken off by a cannon-ball, while his son, a lad of sixteen, was fighting by his side.[51] On the 16th August the cardinal formally demanded the surrender of the place, and received the magnanimous reply that

[50] Van der Kemp, iii. 162. [51] Bor, IV. 219. Bentivoglio, 440.

Hulst would be defended to the death. This did not, however, prevent the opening of negotiations the very same day. All the officers, save one, united in urging Solms to capitulate ; and Solms, for somewhat mysterious reasons, and, as was stated, in much confusion, gave his consent. The single malcontent was the well-named Matthew Held, whose family name meant Hero, and who had been one of the chief actors in the far-famed capture of Breda. He was soon afterwards killed in an unsuccessful attack made by Maurice upon Venlo.

Hulst capitulated on the 18th August.[52] The terms were honourable ; but the indignation throughout the country against Count Solms was very great. The States of Zeeland, of whose regiment he had been commander ever since the death of Sir Philip Sidney, dismissed him from their service, while a torrent of wrath flowed upon him from every part of the country. Members of the States-General refused to salute him in the streets ; eminent personages turned their backs upon him, and for a time there was no one willing to listen to a word in his defence. The usual reaction in such cases followed ; Maurice sustained the commander, who had doubtless committed a grave error, but who had often rendered honourable service to the republic, and the States-General gave him a command as important as that of which he had been relieved by the Zeeland States. It was mainly on account of the tempest thus created within the Netherlands, that an affair of such slight importance came to occupy so large a space in contemporary history. The defenders of Solms told wild stories about the losses of the besieging army. The cardinal, who was thought prodigal of blood, and who was often quoted as saying "his soldiers' lives belonged to God and their bodies to the king,"[53] had sacrificed, it was ridiculously said, according to the statement of the Spaniards themselves, five thousand soldiers before the

18 Aug. 1596.

[52] For the siege and capture of Hulst, see Bor, IV. 213–230. Meteren, 380 *seqq.* Bentivoglio. 439, 440. Reyd, 285–287. Coloma, 225–229.

[53] Reyd, *ubi sup.*

walls of Hulst.[54] It was very logically deduced therefrom that the capture of a few more towns of a thousand inhabitants each would cost him his whole army. People told each other, too, that the conqueror had refused a triumph which the burghers of Brussels wished to prepare for him on his entrance into the capital, and that he had administered the very proper rebuke that, if they had more money than they knew what to do with, they should expend it in aid of the wounded and of the families of the fallen, rather than in velvets and satins and triumphal arches.[55] The humanity of the suggestion hardly tallied with the bloodthirstiness of which he was at the same time so unjustly accused—although it might well be doubted whether the commander-in-chief, even if he could witness unflinchingly the destruction of five thousand soldiers on the battle-field, would dare to confront a new demonstration of schoolmaster Houwaerts and his fellow-pedants.

The fact was, however, that the list of casualties in the cardinal's camp during the six weeks' siege amounted to six hundred, while the losses within the city were at least as many.[56] There was no attempt to relieve the place; for the States, as before observed, had been too much cramped by the strain upon their resources and by the removal of so many veterans for the expedition against Cadiz to be able to muster any considerable forces in the field during the whole of this year.

For a vast war in which the four leading powers of the earth were engaged, the events, to modern eyes, of the campaign of 1596 seem sufficiently meagre. Meantime, during all this campaigning by land and sea in the west, there had been great but profitless bloodshed in the east. With difficulty did the holy Roman Empire withstand the terrible, ever-renewed assaults of the unholy realm of Ottoman—then in the full flush of its power—but the two empires still coun-

[54] Bor, Meteren, Reyd, Coloma, *ubi sup.*, especially Reyd.

[55] Reyd.

[56] Relacion de la presa de la villa de Hulst en Flandes, 17 Aug. 1596. There seems no reason why the cardinal in these private despatches should not have told the truth

terbalanced each other, and contended with each other at the gates of Vienna.

As the fighting became more languid, however, in the western part of Christendom, the negotiations and intrigues grew only the more active. It was most desirable for the republic to effect, if possible, a formal alliance offensive and defensive with France and England against Spain. The diplomacy of the Netherlands had been very efficient in bringing about the declaration of war by Henry against Philip, by which the current year had opened, after Henry and Philip had been doing their best to destroy each other and each other's subjects during the half-dozen previous years. Elizabeth, too, although she had seen her shores invaded by Philip with the most tremendous armaments that had ever floated on the seas, and although she had herself just been sending fire and sword into the heart of Spain, had very recently made the observation[57] that she and Philip were not formally at war with each other. It seemed, therefore, desirable to the States-General that this very practical warfare should be, as it were, reduced to a theorem. In this case the position of the republic to both powers and to Spain itself might perhaps be more accurately defined.

Calvaert, the States' envoy—to use his own words—haunted Henry like his perpetual shadow, and was ever doing his best to persuade him of the necessity of this alliance.[58] De Sancy, as we have seen, had just arrived in England, when the cool proposition of the queen to rescue Calais from Philip on condition of keeping it for herself had been brought to Boulogne by Sidney. Notwithstanding the indignation of the king, he had been induced directly afterwards to send an additional embassy to Elizabeth, with the Duke of Bouillon at its head ; and he had insisted upon Calvaert's accompanying the mission. He had, as he frequently observed,[59] no secrets from the States-General, or from Calvaert, who had been negotiating upon these affairs for two years past and was so

[57] " 'T welck haer Mag. prètendeerde tot noch nict gedaen te hebben." Calvart to the States-General, *apud* Deventer, ii. 117. [58] Ibid. 114. [59] Ibid. 118.

well acquainted with all their bearings. The Dutch envoy was reluctant to go,—for he was seriously ill and very poor in purse,—but Henry urged the point so vehemently, that Calvaert found himself on board ship within six hours of the making of the proposition.[60] The incident shows of how much account the republican diplomatist was held by so keen a judge of mankind as the Béarnese; but it will subsequently appear that the candour of the king towards the States-General and their representative was by no means without certain convenient limitations.

De Sancy had arrived just as—without his knowledge—Sidney had been despatched across the channel with the brief mission already mentioned. When he was presented to the queen, the next day, she excused herself for the propositions by which Henry had been so much enraged, by assuring the envoy that it had been her intention only to keep Calais out of the enemy's hand, so long as the king's forces were too much occupied at a distance to provide for its safety. As diplomatic conferences were about to begin in which—even more than in that age, at least, was usually the case—the object of the two conferring powers was to deceive each other, and at the same time still more decidedly to defraud other states, Sancy accepted the royal explanation, although Henry's special messenger, Loménie, had just brought him from the camp at Boulogne a minute account of the propositions of Sidney.[61]

The envoy had, immediately afterwards, an interview with Lord Burghley, and at once perceived that he was no friend to his master. Cecil observed that the queen had formerly been much bound to the king for religion's sake. As this tie no longer existed, there was nothing now to unite them save the proximity of the two States to each other and their ancient alliances, a bond purely of interest which existed only so long as princes found therein a special advantage.

[60] Calvert to States-General, *apud* Deventer, ii. 118.

[61] See especially for these negotiations De Thou, t. xii. lib. 116, p. 247, *seqq.* Compare Bor, IV. 253–257.

De Sancy replied that the safety of the two crowns depended upon their close alliance against a very powerful foe who was equally menacing to them both. Cecil rejoined that he considered the Spaniards deserving of the very highest praise for having been able to plan so important an enterprise, and to have so well deceived the King of France by the promptness and the secrecy of their operations as to allow him to conceive no suspicion as to their designs.

To this not very friendly sarcasm the envoy, indignant that France should thus be insulted in her misfortunes, exclaimed that he prayed to God that the affairs of Englishmen might never be reduced to such a point as to induce the world to judge by the result merely, as to the sagacity of their counsels. He added that there were many passages through which to enter France, and that it was difficult to be present everywhere, in order to defend them all against the enemy.

A few days afterwards the Duke of Bouillon arrived in London. He had seen Lord Essex at Dover as he passed, and had endeavoured without success to dissuade him from his expedition against the Spanish coast. The conferences opened on the 7th May, at Greenwich, between Burghley, Cobham, the Lord Chamberlain, and one or two other commissioners on the part of the queen, and Bouillon, Sancy, Du Vair, and Ancel, as plenipotentiaries of Henry. 7 May, 1596.

There was the usual indispensable series of feints at the outset, as if it were impossible for statesmen to meet around a green table except as fencers in the field or pugilists in the ring.

"We have nothing to do," said Burghley, "except to listen to such propositions as may be made on the part of the king, and to repeat them to her Highness the queen."

"You cannot be ignorant," replied Bouillon, "of the purpose for which we have been sent hither by his Very Christian Majesty. You know very well that it is to conclude a league with England. 'Tis necessary, therefore, for the English to begin by declaring whether they are disposed to enter into

such an alliance. This point once settled, the French can make their propositions, but it would be idle to dispute about the conditions of a treaty, if there is after all no treaty to be made."

To this Cecil rejoined, that, if the king were reduced to the necessity of asking succour from the queen, and of begging for her alliance, it was necessary for them, on the other hand, to see what he was ready to do for the queen in return, and to learn what advantage she could expect from the league.

The duke said that the English statesmen were perfectly aware of the French intention of proposing a league against the common enemy of both nations, and that it would be unquestionably for the advantage of both to unite their forces for a vigorous attack upon Spain, in which case it would be more difficult for the Spanish to resist them than if each were acting separately. It was no secret that the Spaniards would rather attack England than France, because their war against England, being coloured by a religious motive, would be much less odious, and would even have a specious pretext. Moreover the conquest of England would give them an excellent vantage ground to recover what they had lost in the Netherlands. If, on the contrary, the enemy should throw himself with his whole force upon France, the king, who would perhaps lose many places at once, and might hardly be able to maintain himself single-handed against domestic treason and a concentrated effort on the part of Spain, would probably find it necessary to make a peace with that power. Nothing could be more desirable for Spain than such a result, for she would then be free to attack England and Holland, undisturbed by any fear of France. This was a piece of advice, the duke said, which the king offered, in the most friendly spirit, and as a proof of his affection, to her Majesty's earnest consideration.

Burghley replied that all this seemed to him no reason for making a league. "What more can the queen do," he observed, "than she is already doing? She has invaded Spain by land and sea, she has sent troops to Spain, France,

and the Netherlands; she has lent the king fifteen hundred thousand crowns in gold. In short, the envoys ought rather to be studying how to repay her Majesty for her former benefits than to be soliciting fresh assistance." He added that the king was so much stronger by the recent gain of Marseilles as to be easily able to bear the loss of places of far less importance, while Ireland, on the contrary, was a constant danger to the queen. The country was already in a blaze, on account of the recent landing effected there by the Spaniards, and it was a very ancient proverb among the English, that to attack England it was necessary to take the road of Ireland.

Bouillon replied that in this war there was much difference between the position of France and that of England. The queen, notwithstanding hostilities, obtained her annual revenue as usual, while the king was cut off from his resources and obliged to ruin his kingdom in order to wage war. Sancy added, that it must be obvious to the English ministers that the peril of Holland was likewise the peril of England and of France, but that at the same time they could plainly see that the king, if not succoured, would be forced to a peace with Spain. All his counsellors were urging him to this, and it was the interest of all his neighbours to prevent such a step. Moreover, the proposed league could not but be advantageous to the English; whether by restraining the Spaniards from entering England, or by facilitating a combined attack upon the common enemy. The queen might invade any portion of the Flemish coast at her pleasure, while the king's fleet could sail with troops from his ports to prevent any attack upon her realms.

At this Burghley turned to his colleagues and said, in English, "The French are acting according to the proverb; they wish to sell us the bear-skin before they have killed the bear." [62]

Sancy, who understood English, rejoined, "We have no

[62] De Thou, 653. The historian, probably, according to Fruin, 346, took his account from the papers of Du Vair.

bear-skin to sell, but we are giving you a very good and salutary piece of advice. It is for you to profit by it as you may."

"Where are these ships of war, of which you were speaking?" asked Burghley.

"They are at Rochelle, at Bordeaux, and at St. Malo," replied de Sancy.

"And these ports are not in the king's possession," said the Lord Treasurer.

The discussion was growing warm. The Duke of Bouillon, in order to put an end to it, said that what England had most to fear was a descent by Spain upon her coasts, and that the true way to prevent this was to give occupation to Philip's army in Flanders. The soldiers in the fleet then preparing were raw levies with which he would not venture to assail her kingdom. The veterans in Flanders were the men on whom he relied for that purpose. Moreover the queen, who had great influence with the States-General, would procure from them a prohibition of all commerce between the provinces and Spain; all the Netherlands would be lost to Philip, his armies would disperse of their own accord; the princes of Italy, to whom the power of Spain was a perpetual menace, would secretly supply funds to the allied powers, and the Germans, declared enemies of Philip, would furnish troops.

Burghley asserted confidently that this could never be obtained from the Hollanders, who lived by commerce alone. Upon which Sancy, wearied with all these difficulties, interrupted the Lord Treasurer by exclaiming, "If the king is to expect neither an alliance nor any succour on your part, he will be very much obliged to the queen if she will be good enough to inform him of the decision taken by her, in order that he may, upon his side, take the steps most suitable to the present position of his affairs."

The session then terminated. Two days afterwards, in another conference, Burghley offered three thousand men on the part of the queen, on condition that they should be raised

at the king's expense, and that they should not leave England until they had received a month's pay in advance.

The Duke of Bouillon said this was far from being what had been expected of the generosity of her Majesty, that if the king had money he would find no difficulty in raising troops in Switzerland and Germany, and that there was a very great difference between hired princes and allies.[63] The English ministers having answered that this was all the queen could do, the duke and Sancy rose in much excitement, saying that they had then no further business than to ask for an audience of leave, and to return to France as fast as possible.

Before they bade farewell to the queen, however, the envoys sent a memoir to her Majesty, in which they set forth that the first proposition as to a league had been made by Sir Henry Umton, and that now, when the king had sent commissioners to treat concerning an alliance, already recommended by the queen's ambassador in France, they had been received in such a way as to indicate a desire to mock them rather than to treat with them. They could not believe, they said, that it was her Majesty's desire to use such language as had been addressed to them, and they therefore implored her plainly to declare her intentions, in order that they might waste no more time unnecessarily, especially as the high offices with which their sovereign had honoured them did not allow them to remain for a long time absent from France.

The effect of this memoir upon the queen was, that fresh conferences were suggested, which took place at intervals between the 11th and the 26th of May. They were characterized by the same mutual complaints of overreachings and of shortcomings by which all the previous discussions had been distinguished. On the 17th May the French envoys even insisted on taking formal farewell of the queen, and were received by her Majesty for that purpose at a final audience. After they had left the presence—the preparations

[63] "Beaucoup de différence entre des princes à gages et des alliés."—De Thou, 655.

for their homeward journey being already made—the queen sent Sir Robert Cecil, Henry Brooke, son of Lord Cobham, and La Fontaine, minister of a French church in England, to say to them how very much mortified she was that the state of her affairs did not permit her to give the king as much assistance as he desired, and to express her wish to speak to them once more before their departure.

17 May.

The result of the audience given accordingly to the envoys, two days later, was the communication of her decision to enter into the league proposed, but without definitely concluding the treaty until it should be ratified by the king.

On the 26th May articles were finally agreed upon, by which the king and queen agreed to defend each other's dominions, to unite in attacking the common enemy, and to invite other princes and states equally interested with themselves in resisting the ambitious projects of Spain, to join in the league. It was arranged that an army should be put in the field as soon as possible, at the expense of the king and queen, and of such other powers as should associate themselves in the proposed alliance; that this army should invade the dominions of the Spanish monarch, that the king and queen were never, without each other's consent, to make peace or truce with Philip; that the queen should immediately raise four thousand infantry to serve six months of every year in Picardy and Normandy, with the condition that they were never to be sent to a distance of more than fifty leagues from Boulogne; that when the troubles of Ireland should be over the queen should be at liberty to add new troops to the four thousand men thus promised by her to the league; that the queen was to furnish to these four thousand men six months' pay in advance before they should leave England, and that the king should agree to repay the amount six months afterwards, sending meanwhile four nobles to England as hostages. If the dominions of the queen should be attacked it was stipulated that, at two months' notice, the king should raise four thousand men at

26 May.

the expense of the queen and send them to her assistance, and that they were to serve for six months at her charge, but were not to be sent to a distance of more than fifty leagues from the coasts of France.[64]

The English were not willing that the States-General should be comprehended among the powers to be invited to join the league, because being under the protection of the Queen of England they were supposed to have no will but hers.[65] Burghley insisted accordingly that, in speaking of those who were thus to be asked, no mention was to be made of peoples nor of states, for fear lest the States-General might be included under those terms.[66] The queen was, however, brought at last to yield the point, and consented, in order to satisfy the French envoys, that to the word princes should be added the general expression orders or estates.[66] The obstacle thus interposed to the formation of the league by the hatred of the queen and of the privileged classes of England to popular liberty, and by the secret desire entertained of regaining that sovereignty over the provinces which had been refused ten years before by Elizabeth, was at length set aside. The republic, which might have been stifled at its birth, was now a formidable fact, and could neither be annexed to the English dominions nor deprived of its existence as a new member of the European family.

It being no longer possible to gainsay the presence of the young commonwealth among the nations, the next best thing—so it was thought—was to defraud her in the treaty to which she was now invited to accede. This, as it will presently appear, the King of France and the Queen of England succeeded in doing very thoroughly, and they accomplished it notwithstanding the astuteness and the diligence of the States' envoy, who at Henry's urgent request had accompanied the French mission to England. Calvaert had been very active in bringing about the arrangement, to assist in which he had, as we have seen, risen from a sick bed

[64] De Thou, 647–660, *seqq.*
[65] Ibid. 660.
[66] Bor, IV. 256. De Thou, *ubi sup.*
[66] Ibid

and made the journey to England. "The proposition for an offensive and defensive alliance was agreed to by her Majesty's Council, but under intolerable and impracticable conditions," said he, "and, as such, rejected by the duke and Sancy, so that they took leave of her Majesty. At last, after some negotiation in which, without boasting, I may say that I did some service, it was again taken in hand, and at last, thank God, although with much difficulty, the league has been concluded."[67]

When the task was finished the French envoys departed to obtain their master's ratification of the treaty. Elizabeth expressed herself warmly in regard to her royal brother, inviting him earnestly to pay her a visit, in which case she said she would gladly meet him half way; for a sight of him would be her only consolation in the midst of her adversity and annoyance. "He may see other princesses of a more lovely appearance," she added, "but he will never make a visit to a more faithful friend."[68]

But the treaty thus concluded was for the public. The real agreement between France and England was made by the commissioners a few days later, and reduced the ostensible arrangement to a sham, a mere decoy to foreign nations, especially to the Dutch republic, to induce them to imitate England in joining the league, and to emulate her likewise in affording that substantial assistance to the league which in reality England was very far from giving.

"Two contracts were made," said Secretary of State Villeroy; "the one public, to give credit and reputation to the said league, *the other secret, which destroyed the effects and the promises of the first.* By the first his Majesty was to be succoured by four thousand infantry, *which number was limited by the second contract to two thousand, who were to reside and to serve only in the cities of Boulogne and Montreuil,* assisted by an equal number of French, and not otherwise, and on condition of not being removed from those towns unless his Majesty should be personally present in Picardy

[67] Calvaert's Report, in Deventer, 117. [68] Ibid.

with an army, in which case they might serve in Picardy, but nowhere else."[69]

An English garrison in a couple of French seaports, over against the English coast, would hardly have seemed a sufficient inducement to other princes and states to put large armies in the field to sustain the Protestant league, had they known that this was the meagre result of the protocolling and disputations that had been going on all the summer at Greenwich.

Nevertheless the decoy did its work. The envoys returned to France, and it was not until three months later that the Duke of Bouillon again made his appearance in England, bringing the treaty duly ratified by Henry. The league was then solemnized, on the 26th August, by the queen with much pomp and ceremony. Three peers of the realm waited upon the French ambassador at his lodgings, and escorted him and his suite in seventeen royal coaches to the Tower. Seven splendid barges then conveyed them along the Thames to Greenwich. On the pier the ambassador was received by the Earl of Derby at the head of a great suite of nobles and high functionaries, and conducted to the palace of Nonesuch.[70] 26 Aug. 1596.

There was a religious ceremony in the royal chapel, where a special pavilion had been constructed. Standing within this sanctuary, the queen, with her hand on her breast, swore faithfully to maintain the league just concluded. She then gave her hand to the Duke of Bouillon, who held it in both his own, while psalms were sung and the organ resounded through the chapel. Afterwards there was a splendid banquet in the palace, the duke sitting in solitary grandeur at

[69] Fruin, in his masterly 'Tien Jaren uit den tachtigjarigen Oorlog,' is the first, so far as I know, that ever called public attention to the extraordinary perfidy of these transactions. See in particular, pp. 372–374.

Camden, however, alludes to the fact that "shortly after there was another treaty had, wherein it was agreed that this year no more than two thousand English should be sent over, which should serve only in Boulogne and Monstreul, unless the king should come personally to Picardy, &c. (b. iv. p. 525). But the essence of this "other treaty" was, that it was kept secret from those most interested in knowing its existence.

[70] Bor, IV. 256, 257.

the royal table, being placed at a respectful distance from her Majesty, and the dishes being placed on the board by the highest nobles of the realm, who, upon their knees, served the queen with wine. No one save the ambassador sat at Elizabeth's table, but in the same hall was spread another, at which the Earl of Essex entertained many distinguished guests, young Count Lewis Gunther of Nassau among the number.

In the midsummer twilight the brilliantly decorated barges were again floating on the historic river, the gaily-coloured lanterns lighting the sweep of the oars, and the sound of lute and viol floating merrily across the water. As the ambassador came into the courtyard of his house, he found a crowd of several thousand people assembled, who shouted welcome to the representative of Henry, and invoked blessings on the head of Queen Elizabeth and of her royal brother of France. Meanwhile all the bells of London were ringing, artillery was thundering, and bonfires were blazing, until the night was half spent.[71]

Such was the holiday-making by which the league between the great Protestant queen and the ex-chief of the Huguenots of France was celebrated within a year after the pope had received him, a repentant sinner, into the fold of the Church. Truly it might be said that religion was rapidly ceasing to be the line of demarcation among the nations, as had been the case for the two last generations of mankind.

The Duke of Bouillon soon afterwards departed for the Netherlands, where the regular envoy to the commonwealth, Paul Chouart Seigneur de Buzanval, had already been preparing the States-General for their entrance into the league.

11 Sept. 1596. Of course it was duly impressed upon those republicans that they should think themselves highly honoured by the privilege of associating themselves with so august an alliance. The queen wrote an earnest letter to the States urging them to join the league. "Especially should you do so," she said, "on account of the reputation

[71] Bor, IV. 256, 257.

which you will thereby gain for your affairs with the people who are under you, seeing you thus sustained (besides the certainty which you have of our favour) by the friendship of other confederated princes, and particularly by that of the most Christian king." [72]

On the 31st October the articles of agreement under which the republic acceded to the new confederation were signed at the Hague. Of course it was not the exact counterpart of the famous Catholic association. Madam League, after struggling feebly for the past few years, a decrepit beldame, was at last dead and buried. But there had been a time when she was filled with exuberant and terrible life. She, at least, had known the object of her creation, and never, so long as life was in her, had she faltered in her dread purpose. To extirpate Protestantism, to murder Protestants, to burn, hang, butcher, bury them alive, to dethrone every Protestant sovereign in Europe, especially to assassinate the Queen of England, the Prince of Orange, with all his race, and Henry of Navarre, and to unite in the accomplishment of these simple purposes all the powers of Christendom under the universal monarchy of Philip of Spain—for all this, blood was shed in torrents, and the precious metals of the "Indies" squandered as fast as the poor savages, who were thus taking their first lessons in the doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth, could dig it from the mines. For this America had been summoned, as it were by almighty fiat, out of previous darkness, in order that it might furnish money with which to massacre all the heretics of the earth. For this great purpose was the sublime discovery of the Genoese sailor to be turned to account. These aims were intelligible, and had in part been attained. William of Orange had fallen, and a patent of nobility, with a handsome fortune, had been bestowed upon his assassin. Elizabeth's life had been frequently attempted. So had those of Henry, of Maurice, of Olden-Barneveld. Divine providence might perhaps guide the hand of future murderers with greater

31 Oct. 1596.

[72] Bor, IV. 260.

accuracy, for even if Madam League were dead, her ghost still walked among the Jesuits and summoned them to complete the crimes left yet unfinished.

But what was the design of the new confederacy? It was not a Protestant league. Henry of Navarre could no longer be the chief of such an association, although it was to Protestant powers only that he could turn for assistance. It was to the commonwealth of the Netherlands, to the northern potentates and to the Calvinist and Lutheran princes of Germany, that the king and queen could alone appeal in their designs against Philip of Spain.

The position of Henry was essentially a false one from the beginning. He felt it to be so, and the ink was scarce dry with which he signed the new treaty before he was secretly casting about him to make peace with that power with which he was apparently summoning all the nations of the earth to do battle. Even the cautious Elizabeth was deceived by the crafty Béarnese, while both united to hoodwink the other states and princes.

On the 31st October, accordingly, the States-General agreed
31 Oct. 1596. to go into the league with England and France, "in order to resist the enterprises and ambitious designs of the King of Spain against all the princes and potentates of Christendom." As the queen had engaged—according to the public treaty or decoy—to furnish four thousand infantry to the league, the States now agreed to raise and pay for another four thousand to be maintained in the king's service at a cost of four hundred and fifty thousand florins annually, to be paid by the month. The king promised, in case the Netherlands should be invaded by the enemy with the greater part of his force, that these four thousand soldiers should return to the Netherlands. The king further bound himself to carry on a sharp offensive war in Artois and Hainault.[73]

[73] Articles of agreement between the King and the States-General of the Netherlands, signed by Bouillon and Buzanval, 31 Oct. 1596, *apud* Bor, IV. 265–267.

The States-General would have liked a condition inserted in the treaty that no peace should be made with Spain by England or France without the consent of the provinces; but this was peremptorily refused.

Perhaps the republic had no special reason to be grateful for the grudging and almost contemptuous manner in which it had thus been virtually admitted into the community of sovereigns; but the men who directed its affairs were far too enlightened not to see how great a step was taken when their political position, now conceded to them, had been sceured. In good faith they intended to carry out the provisions of the new treaty, and they immediately turned their attention to the vital matters of making new levies and of imposing new taxes, by means of which they might render themselves useful to their new allies.

Meantime Ancel was deputed by Henry to visit the various courts of Germany and the north in order to obtain, if possible, new members for the league.[74] But Germany was difficult to rouse. The dissensions among Protestants were ever inviting the assaults of the Papists. Its multitude of sovereigns were passing their leisure moments in wrangling among themselves as usual on abstruse points of theology and devoting their serious hours to banquetting, deep drinking, and the pleasures of the chase. The jeremiads of old John of Nassau grew louder than ever, but his voice was of one crying in the wilderness. The wrath to come of that horrible Thirty Years' War, which he was not to witness, seemed to inspire all his prophetic diatribes. But there were few to heed them. Two great dangers seemed ever impending over Christendom, and it is difficult to decide which fate would have been the more terrible, the establishment of the universal monarchy of Philip II., or the conquest of Germany by the Grand Turk. But when Ancel and other emissaries sought to obtain succour against the danger from the south-west, he was answered by the clash of arms and

[74] See an account of Ancel's missions, speeches, and negotiations, in De Thou, xiii. 77–87, l. 118. Bor, IV. 289.

the shrieks of horror which came daily from the south-east.[75] In vain was it urged, and urged with truth, that the Alcoran was less cruel than the Inquisition, that the soil of Europe might be overrun by Turks and Tartars, and the crescent planted triumphantly in every village, with less disaster to the human race, and with better hope that the germs of civilization and the precepts of Christianity might survive the invasion, than if the system of Philip, of Torquemada, and of Alva, should become the universal law. But the Turk was a frank enemy of Christianity, while Philip murdered Christians in the name of Christ. The distinction imposed upon the multitudes, with whom words were things. Moreover, the danger from the young and enterprising Mahomet seemed more appalling to the imagination than the menace, from which experience had taken something of its terrors, of the old and decrepit Philip.

The Ottoman empire, in its exact discipline, in its terrible concentration of purpose, in its contempt for all arts and sciences, and all human occupation save the trade of war and the pursuit of military dominion, offered a strong contrast to the distracted condition of the holy Roman empire, where an intellectual and industrious people, dis-

[75] "J'ai cru de devoir ici sur la foi de ceux qui en ont été témoins oculaires, afin de donner par là une juste idée de la splendeur de l'empire Ottoman, de ses richesses, de sa puissance et de la discipline exacte qui s'observe au dedans et au dehors, afin que nos peuples ne soient plus étonnés ni si indignés, si tandis que nos princes Chrétiens languissent dans l'oiseveté et dans une mollesse infame et travaillent sans cesse à se détruire les uns les autres par leurs haines ou par leurs jalousies, les Turcs dont les commencements ont été si peu de chose ont formé un si grand empire. Quand on fera réflexion sur la séverité de leur discipline, sur leur éloignement du luxe et de tous les vices que traine avec soi la mollesse, et qu'il n'y a point d'autre route parmi eux pour s'élever aux grands emplois, et faire de grandes fortunes, que les vertus militaires, leurs vaste progrès n'auront plus rien qui surprenne." Such are the admiring words of so enlightened a statesman and historian as Jacques Auguste de Thou, xii. 580, l. 115.

"Wol zu wünschen wehre," said old John of Nassau, "das man in Zeiten uffwachen und uff die wege gedenken wolte, wie nicht, allein diesem bluthundt dem Türken sondern auch dem Pabst, welchen D. Luther seliger in seinem christlichen Gesang, 'Erhalt uns Herrbei deinem Wort,' vor und den Turken nachsetzt, mit verleihung Göttlicher hülffe möge widerstanden, und viel jamer und ehlendt und blut vergiessen, ja die verherung der ganzen Teutschen nation sambt andren christlichen Königreichen und Ländern vorkommen werden," &c., &c. Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, I. 330 (2e serie).

tracted by half a century of religious controversy and groaning under one of the most elaborately perverse of all the political systems ever invented by man, seemed to offer itself an easy prey to any conqueror. The Turkish power was in the fulness of its aggressive strength, and seemed far more formidable than it would have done had there been clearer perceptions of what constitutes the strength and the wealth of nations. Could the simple truth have been thoroughly comprehended that a realm founded upon such principles was the grossest of absurdities, the Eastern might have seemed less terrible than the Western danger.

But a great campaign, at no considerable distance from the walls of Vienna, had occupied the attention of Germany during the autumn. Mahomet had taken the field in person with a hundred thousand men, and the emperor's brother, Maximilian, in conjunction with the Prince of Transylvania, at the head of a force of equal magnitude, had gone forth to give him battle. Between the Theiss and the Danube, at Keveste, not far from the city of Erlau, on the 26th October, the terrible encounter on which the fate of Christendom seemed to hang at last took place, and Europe held its breath in awful suspense until its fate should be decided. When the result at last became known, a horrible blending of the comic and the tragic, such as has rarely been presented in history, startled the world. Seventy thousand human beings—Moslems and Christians—were lying dead or wounded on the banks of a nameless little stream which flows into the Theiss, and the commanders-in-chief of both armies were running away as fast as horses could carry them. Each army believed itself hopelessly defeated, and abandoning tents, baggage, artillery, ammunition, the remnants of each betook themselves to panic-stricken flight. Generalissimo Maximilian never looked behind him as he fled, until he had taken refuge in Kaschan, and had thence made his way, deeply mortified and despondent, to Vienna. The Prince of Transylvania retreated into the depths of his own principality. Mahomet, with his principal officers, shut himself

26 Oct. 1596.

up in Buda, after which he returned to Constantinople and abandoned himself for a time to a voluptuous ease, inconsistent with the Ottoman projects of conquering the world. The Turks, less prone to desperation than the Christians, had been utterly overthrown in the early part of the action, but when the victors were, as usual, greedily bent upon plunder before the victory had been fairly secured, the tide of battle was turned by the famous Italian renegade Cicala. The Turks, too, had the good sense to send two days afterwards and recover their artillery, trains, and other property, which ever since the battle had been left at the mercy of the first comers.[76]

So ended the Turkish campaign of the year 1596.[77] Ancel, accordingly, fared ill in his negotiations with Germany. On the other hand Mendoza, Admiral of Arragon, had been industriously but secretly canvassing the same regions as the representative of the Spanish king.[78] It was important for Philip, who put more faith in the league of the three powers than Henry himself did, to lose no time in counteracting its influence. The condition of the holy Roman empire had for some time occupied his most serious thoughts. It seemed plain that Rudolph would never marry. Certainly he would never marry the Infanta, although he was very angry that his brother should aspire to the hand which he himself rejected. In case of his death without children, Philip thought it possible that there might be a Protestant revolution in Germany, and that the house of Habsburg might lose the imperial crown altogether. It was even said that the emperor himself was of that opinion, and preferred that the empire should end with his own life.[79] Philip considered[80] that neither Matthias nor Maximilian was fit to succeed

[76] De Thou, xii. 567–594, l. 115. Meteren, 388. Reyd, 297.

[77] Ibid. [78] Bor, IV. 293.

[79] "Siendo comun opinion en Alemania que desea que con su muerte se acabe el imperio en estas partes."—Relacion de lo que el Almirante de Aragon ha colegido en el tiempo que ha estado en Alemaña y en la corte Cesarea tratando con personas prudentes cerca el negoꝯ de Rey de Romanos y sucesion a los estados electivos de Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia y Ungria. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[80] Admiral of Arragon to Philip, 17 Dec. 1596. (Arch de Sim. MS.)

their brother, being both of them lukewarm in the Catholic faith.[81] In other words, he chose that his destined son-in-law, the Cardinal Albert, should supersede them, and he was anxious to have him appointed as soon as possible King of the Romans.

"His Holiness the Pope and the King of Spain," said the Admiral of Arragon, "think it necessary to apply most stringent measures to the emperor to compel him to appoint a successor, because, in case of his death without one, the administration during the vacancy would fall to the elector palatine,—a most perverse Calvinistic heretic, and as great an enemy of the house of Austria and of our holy religion as the Turk himself—as sufficiently appears in those diabolical laws of his published in the palatinate a few months since. A vacancy is so dreadful, that in the north of Germany the world would come to an end; yet the emperor, being of rather a timid nature than otherwise, is inclined to quiet, and shrinks from the discussions and conflicts likely to be caused by an appointment. Therefore his Holiness and his Catholic Majesty, not choosing that we should all live in danger of the world's falling in ruins, have resolved to provide the remedy. They are to permit the electors to use the faculty which they possess of suspending the emperor and depriving him of his power; there being examples of this in other times against emperors who governed ill." [82]

The Admiral farther alluded to the great effort made two years before to elect the King of Denmark emperor, reminding Philip that in Hamburg they had erected triumphal arches, and made other preparations to receive him. This year, he observed, the Protestants were renewing their schemes. On the occasion of the baptism of the child of the elector palatine, the English envoy being present, and Queen Elizabeth being god-mother, they had agreed upon nine articles of faith much more hostile to the Catholic creed than anything ever yet professed. In case of the death of

[81] Admiral of Arragon to Philip, 17 Dec. 1596. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)
[82] Relacion del Almirante de Aragon, &c., *ubi sup.*

the emperor, this elector palatine would of course make much trouble, and the emperor should therefore be induced, by fair means if possible, on account of the great inconvenience of forcing him, but not without a hint of compulsion, to acquiesce in the necessary measures. Philip was represented as willing to assist the empire with considerable force against the Turk—as there could be no doubt that Hungary was in great danger—but in recompense it was necessary to elect a King of the Romans in all respects satisfactory to him. There were three objections to the election of Albert, whose recent victories and great abilities entitled him in Philip's opinion to the crown. Firstly, there was a doubt whether the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia were elective or hereditary, and it was very important that the King of the Romans should succeed to those two crowns, because the electors and other princes having fiefs within those kingdoms would be unwilling to swear fealty to two suzerains, and as Albert was younger than his brothers he could scarcely expect to take by inheritance.

Secondly, Albert had no property of his own, but the Admiral suggested that the emperor might be made to abandon to him the income of the Tyrol.

Thirdly, it was undesirable for Albert to leave the Netherlands at that juncture. Nevertheless, it was suggested by the easy-going Admiral, with the same tranquil insolence which marked all his proposed arrangements, that as Rudolph would retire from the government altogether, Albert, as King of the Romans and acting emperor, could very well take care of the Netherlands as part of his whole realm. Albert being moreover about to marry the Infanta, the handsome dowry which he would receive with her from the king would enable him to sustain his dignity.[83]

Thus did Philip, who had been so industrious during the many past years in his endeavours to expel the heretic Queen of England and the Huguenot Henry from the realms

[83] Relacion del Almirante, *ubi sup.* Letter of the Admiral, 17 Dec. 1596, last cited.

of their ancestors, and to seat himself or his daughter, or one or another of his nephews, in their places, now busy himself with schemes to discrown Rudolph of Habsburg, and to place the ubiquitous Infanta and her future husband on his throne. Time would show the result.

Meantime, while the Protestant Ancel and other agents of the new league against Philip were travelling about from one court of Europe to another to gain adherents to their cause, the great founder of the confederacy was already secretly intriguing for a peace with that monarch. The ink was scarce dry on the treaty to which he had affixed his signature before he was closeted with the agents of the Archduke Albert, and receiving affectionate messages and splendid presents from that military ecclesiastic.

In November, 1596, La Balvena, formerly a gentleman of the Count de la Fera, came to Rouen. He had a very secret interview with Henry IV. at three o'clock one morning, and soon afterwards at a very late hour in the night. The king asked him why the archduke was not willing to make a general peace, including England and Holland. Balvena replied that he had no authority to treat on that subject; it being well known, however, that the King of Spain would never consent to a peace with the rebels, except on the ground of the exclusive maintenance of the Catholic religion.[84] Nov. 1596.

He is taking the very course to destroy that religion, said Henry. The king then avowed himself in favour of peace for the sake of the poor afflicted people of all countries. He was not tired of arms, he said, which were so familiar to him, but his wish was to join in a general crusade against the Turk. This would be better for the Catholic religion than the present occupations of all parties. He avowed that the

[84] Relacion de lo que ha hecha la Balvena, November, 1596. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

I am not quite sure as to the orthography of the name of this secret agent. Van Deventer, ii. 141-146 prints it Vulneve, but as the B and V in Spanish are nearly identical, I am inclined to prefer the name given in the text. It is, however, difficult to ascertain how obscurer men were correctly called in days when grave historians could designate so illustrious a personage as Sir Walter Raleigh as Guateral.

Queen of England was his very good friend, and said he had never yet broken his faith with her, and never would do so. She had sent him the Garter, and he had accepted it, as his brother Henry III. had done before him, and he would negotiate no peace which did not include her.[85] The not very distant future was to show how much these stout professions of sincerity were worth. Meantime Henry charged Balvena to keep their interviews a profound secret, especially from every one in France. The king expressed great anxiety lest the Huguenots should hear of it, and the agent observed that any suspicion of peace negotiations would make great disturbance among the heretics, as one of the conditions of the king's absolution by the pope was supposed to be that he should make war upon his Protestant subjects. On his return from Rouen the emissary made a visit to Monlevet, marshal of the camp to Henry IV. and a Calvinist. There was much conversation about peace, in the course of which Monlevet observed, "We are much afraid of you in negotiation, for we know that you Spaniards far surpass us in astuteness."

"Nay," said Balvena, "I will only repeat the words of the Emperor Charles V.—'The Spaniards seem wise, and are madmen; the French seem madmen, and are wise.[86]'"

A few weeks later the archduke sent Balvena again to Rouen. He had another interview with the king, at which not only Villeroy and other Catholics were present, but Monlevet also. This proved a great obstacle to freedom of conversation. The result was the same as before. There were strong professions of a desire on the part of the king for a peace, but it was for a general peace; nothing further.

Dec. 1596.

On the 4th December Balvena was sent for by the king before daylight, just as he was mounting his horse for the chase.

"Tell his Highness," said Henry, "that I am all frankness,

[85] 2ª Relacion que Balvena ha hecha á su Alteza volviendo de Francia. December, 1596. (Archives de Simancas MS.)

[86] "Los Españoles parecen sabios y son locos, y los franceses parecen locos y son sabios."

and incapable of dissimulation, and that I believe him too much a man of honour to wish to deceive me. Go tell him that I am most anxious for peace, and that I deeply regret the defeat that has been sustained against the Turk. Had I been there I would have come out dead or victorious. Let him arrange an agreement between us, so that *presto* he may see me there with my brave nobles, with infantry and with plenty of Switzers. Tell him that I am his friend. Begone. Be diligent." [87]

On the last day but two of the year, the archduke, having heard this faithful report of Henry's affectionate sentiments, sent him a suit of splendid armour, such as was then made better in Antwerp than anywhere else, magnificently burnished of a blue colour, according to an entirely new fashion.[88] 29 Dec. 1596.

With such secret courtesies between his most Catholic Majesty's vicegerent and himself was Henry's league with the two Protestant powers accompanied.

Exactly at the same epoch Philip was again preparing an invasion of the queen's dominions. An armada of a hundred and twenty-eight ships, with a force of fourteen thousand infantry and three thousand horse, had been assembled during the autumn of this year at Lisbon, notwithstanding the almost crushing blow that the English and Hollanders had dealt the king's navy so recently at Cadiz.[89] This new expedition was intended for Ireland, where it was supposed that the Catholics would be easily roused. It was also hoped that the King of Scots might be induced to embrace this opportunity of wreaking vengeance on his mother's destroyer. "He was on the watch the last time that my armada went forth against the English," said Philip, "and he has now no reason to do the contrary, especially if he remembers that here is a chance to requite the cruelty which was practised on his mother." [90]

[87] 2ª Relacion, &c.

[88] Albert to Philip, 29 Dec. 1596. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) "Armas buenas de las que se labran en Anveres que son pabonadas de cierta labor neuva." Compare Reyd, 290.

[89] Philip to Albert, 4 October, 1596. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

[90] Ibid.

The fleet sailed on the 5th October under the command of the Count Santa Gadea. Its immediate destination was the coast of Ireland, where they were to find some favourable point for disembarking the troops. Having accomplished this, the ships, with the exception of a few light vessels, were to take their departure and pass the winter in Ferrol. In case the fleet should be forced by stress of weather on the English coast, the port of Milford Haven in Wales was to be seized, "because," said Philip, "there are a great many Catholics there well affected to our cause, and who have a special enmity to the English." In case the English fleet should come forth to give battle, Philip sent directions that it was to be conquered at once, and that after the victory Milford Haven was to be firmly held.[91]

5 Oct. 1596.

This was easily said. But it was not fated that this expedition should be more triumphant than that of the unconquerable armada which had been so signally conquered eight years before. Scarcely had the fleet put to sea when it was overtaken by a tremendous storm, in which forty ships foundered with five thousand men.[92] The shattered remnants took refuge in Ferrol. There the ships were to refit, and in the spring the attempt was to be renewed. Thus it was ever with the King of Spain. There was a placid unconsciousness on his part of defeat which sycophants thought sublime. And such insensibility might have been sublimity had the monarch been in person on the deck of a frigate in the howling tempest, seeing ship after ship go down before his eyes, and exerting himself with tranquil energy and skill to encourage his followers, and to preserve what remained afloat from destruction. Certainly such exhibitions of human superiority to the elements are in the highest degree inspiring. His father had shown himself on more than one occasion the master of his fate. The King of France, too, bare-headed, in his iron corslet, leading a forlorn hope, and, by the personal charm of his valour, changing fugitives into heroes and defeat

[91] Philip to Albert, 5 October, 1596. (Arch. de Simancas MS)
[92] Same to same, 31 December, 1596. (Ibid.) Reyd, 297.

into victory, had afforded many examples of sublime unconsciousness of disaster, such as must ever thrill the souls of mankind. But it is more difficult to be calm in battle and shipwreck than at the writing desk; nor is that the highest degree of fortitude which enables a monarch—himself in safety—to endure without flinching the destruction of his fellow creatures.

No sooner, however, was the remnant of the tempest-tost fleet safe in Ferrol than the king requested the cardinal to collect an army at Calais and forthwith to invade England. He asked his nephew whether he could not manage to send his troops across the channel in vessels of light draught, such as he already had at command, together with some others which might be furnished him from Spain. In this way he was directed to gain a foot-hold in England, and he was to state immediately whether he could accomplish this with his own resources, or should require the assistance of the fleet at Ferrol. The king further suggested that the enemy, encouraged by his success at Cadiz the previous summer, might be preparing a fresh expedition against Spain, in which case the invasion of England would be easier to accomplish.

Thus on the last day of 1596, Philip, whose fleet sent forth for the conquest of Ireland and England had been too crippled to prosecute the adventure, was proposing to his nephew to conquer England without any fleet at all. He had given the same advice to Alexander Farnese so soon as he heard of the destruction of the invincible armada.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Struggle of the Netherlands against Spain — March to Turnhout — Retreat of the Spanish commander — Pursuit and attack — Demolition of the Spanish army — Surrender of the garrison of Turnhout — Improved military science — Moral effect of the battle — The campaign in France — Attack on Amiens by the Spaniards — Sack and burning of the city — De Rosny's plan for reorganization of the finances — Jobbery and speculation — Philip's repudiation of his debts — Effects of the measure — Renewal of persecution by the Jesuits — Contention between Turk and Christian — Envoy from the King of Poland to the Hague to plead for reconciliation with Philip — His subsequent presentation to Queen Elizabeth — Military events — Recovery of Amiens — Feeble operations of the confederate powers against Spain — Marriage of the Princess Emilia, sister of Maurice — Reduction of the castle and town of Alphen — Surrender of Rheinberg — Capitulation of Meurs — Surrender of Grol — Storming and taking of Brevoort — Capitulation of Enschede, Ootmarsum, Oldenzaal, and Lingen — Rebellion of the Spanish garrisons in Antwerp and Ghent — Progress of the peace movement between Henry and Philip — Relations of the three confederate powers — Henry's scheme for reconciliation with Spain — His acceptance of Philip's offer of peace announced to Elizabeth — Endeavours for a general peace.

THE old year had closed with an abortive attempt of Philip to fulfil his favourite dream—the conquest of England. The new year opened with a spirited effort of Prince Maurice to measure himself in the open field with the veteran legions of Spain.

Turnhout, in Brabant, was an open village—the largest in all the Netherlands—lying about twenty-five English miles in almost a direct line south from Gertruydenburg. It was nearly as far distant in an easterly direction from Antwerp, and was about five miles nearer Breda than it was to Gertruydenberg.

At this place the cardinal-archduke had gathered a considerable force, numbering at least four thousand of his best infantry, with several squadrons of cavalry, the whole under

command of the general-in-chief of artillery, Count Varax. People in the neighbourhood were growing uneasy, for it was uncertain in what direction it might be intended to use this formidable force. It was perhaps the cardinal's intention to make a sudden assault upon Breda, the governor of which seemed not inclined to carry out his proposition to transfer that important city to the king, or it was thought that he might take advantage of a hard frost and cross the frozen morasses and estuaries into the land of Ter Tholen, where he might overmaster some of the important strongholds of Zeeland.

Marcellus Bax, that boldest and most brilliant of Holland's cavalry officers, had come to Maurice early in January with an urgent suggestion that no time might be lost in making an attack upon the force of Turnhout, before they should succeed in doing any mischief. The prince pondered the proposition, for a little time, by himself, and then conferred very privately upon the subject with the state-council. On the 14th January it was agreed with that body that the enterprise should be attempted, but with the utmost secrecy. A week later the council sent an express messenger to Maurice urging him not to expose his own life to peril, but to apprise them as soon as possible as to the results of the adventure.

Meantime, patents had been sent to the various garrisons for fifty companies of foot and sixteen squadrons of horse. On the 22nd January Maurice came to Gertruydenberg, the place of rendezvous, attended by Sir Francis Vere and Count Solms. Colonel Kloetingen was already there with the transports of ammunition and a few pieces of artillery from Zeeland, and in the course of the day the whole infantry force had assembled. Nothing could have been managed with greater promptness or secrecy. 22 Jan. 1597.

Next day, before dawn, the march began. The battalia was led by Van der Noot, with six companies of Hollanders. Then came Vere, with eight companies of the reserve, Dockray with eight companies of Englishmen, Murray with eight companies of Scotch, and Kloetingen and 23 Jan. 1597.

La Corde with twelve companies of Dutch and Zeelanders. In front of the last troop under La Corde marched the commander of the artillery, with two demi-cannon and two field-pieces, followed by the ammunition and baggage trains. Hohenlo arrived just as the march was beginning, to whom the stadholder, notwithstanding their frequent differences, communicated his plans, and entrusted the general command of the cavalry. That force met the expedition at Osterhout, a league's distance from Gertruydenberg, and consisted of the best mounted companies, English and Dutch, from the garrisons of Breda, Bergen, Nymegen, and the Zutphen districts.

It was a dismal, drizzly, foggy morning; the weather changing to steady rain as the expedition advanced. There had been alternate frost and thaw for the few previous weeks, and had that condition of the atmosphere continued the adventure could not have been attempted. It had now turned completely to thaw. The roads were all under water, and the march was sufficiently difficult. Nevertheless, it was possible; so the stout Hollanders, Zeelanders, and Englishmen struggled on manfully, shoulder to shoulder, through the mist and the mire. By nightfall the expedition had reached Ravels, at less than a league's distance from Turnhout, having accomplished, under the circumstances, a very remarkable march of over twenty miles. A stream of water, the Neethe, one of the tributaries of the Scheld, separated Ravels from Turnhout, and was crossed by a stone bridge. It was an anxious moment. Maurice discovered by his scouts that he was almost within cannon-shot of several of the most famous regiments in the Spanish army lying fresh, securely posted, and capable of making an attack at any moment. He instantly threw forward Marcellus Bax with four squadrons of Bergen cavalry, who, jaded as they were by their day's work, were to watch the bridge that night, and to hold it against all comers and at every hazard.

The Spanish commander, on his part, had reconnoitred the advancing foe, for it was impossible for the movement to have been so secret or so swift over those inundated roads as to be

shrouded to the last moment in complete mystery. It was naturally to be expected therefore that those splendid legions —the famous Neapolitan tercio of Trevico, the veteran troops of Sultz and Hachicourt, the picked Epirote and Spanish cavalry of Nicolas Basta and Guzman—would be hurled upon the wearied, benumbed, bemired soldiers of the republic, as they came slowly along after their long march through the cold winter's rain.

Varax took no such heroic resolution. Had he done so that January afternoon, the career of Maurice of Nassau might have been brought to a sudden close, despite the affectionate warning of the state-council. Certainly it was difficult for any commander to be placed in a more perilous position than that in which the stadholder found himself. He remained awake and afoot the whole night, perfecting his arrangements for the morning, and watching every indication of a possible advance on the part of the enemy. Marcellus Bax and his troopers remained at the bridge till morning, and were so near the Spaniards that they heard the voices of their pickets, and could even distinguish in the distance the various movements in their camp.

But no attack was made, and the little army of Maurice was allowed to sleep off its fatigue. With the dawn of the 24th January, a reconnoitring party, sent out from the republican camp, discovered that Varax, having no stomach for an encounter, had given his enemies the slip. Long before daylight his baggage and ammunition trains had been sent off in a southerly direction, and his whole force had already left the village of Turnhout. It was the intention of the commander to take refuge in the fortified city of Herenthals, and there await the attack of Maurice. Accordingly, when the stadholder arrived on the fields beyond the immediate precincts of the village, he saw the last of the enemy's rearguard just disappearing from view. The situation was a very peculiar one. 24 Jan. 1597.

The rain and thaw, following upon frosty weather, had converted the fenny country in many directions into a shallow

lake. The little river which flowed by the village had risen above its almost level banks, and could with difficulty be traversed at any point, while there was no permanent bridge, such as there was at Ravels. The retreating Spaniards had made their way through a narrow passage, where a roughly-constructed causeway of planks had enabled the infantry to cross the waters almost in single file, while the cavalry had floundered through as best they might. Those who were acquainted with the country reported that beyond this defile there was an upland heath, a league in extent, full of furze and thickets, where it would be easy enough for Varax to draw up his army in battle array, and conceal it from view. Maurice's scouts, too, brought information that the Spanish commander had left a force of musketeers to guard the passage at the farther end.

This looked very like an ambush. In the opinion of Hohenlo, of Solms, and of Sidney, an advance was not to be thought of; and if the adventure seemed perilous to such hardy and experienced campaigners as these three, the stadholder might well hesitate. Nevertheless, Maurice had made up his mind. Sir Francis Vere and Marcellus Bax confirmed him in his determination, and spoke fiercely of the disgrace which would come upon the arms of the republic if now, after having made a day's march to meet the enemy, they should turn their backs upon him just as he was doing his best to escape.

On leave obtained from the prince, these two champions, the Englishman and the Hollander, spurred their horses through the narrow pass, with the waters up to the saddle-bow, at the head of a mere handful of troopers, not more than a dozen men in all. Two hundred musketeers followed, picking their way across the planks. As they emerged into the open country beyond, the Spanish soldiers guarding the passage fled without firing a shot. Such was already the discouraging effect produced upon veterans by the unexpected order given that morning to retreat. Vere and Bax sent word for all the cavalry to advance at once, and meantime hovered about

the rearguard of the retreating enemy, ready to charge upon him so soon as they should be strong enough.

Maurice lost no time in plunging with his whole mounted force through the watery defile; directing the infantry to follow as fast as practicable. When the commander-in-chief with his eight hundred horsemen, Englishmen, Zeelanders, Hollanders, and Germans, came upon the heath, the position and purpose of the enemy were plainly visible. He was not drawn up in battle order, waiting to sweep down upon his rash assailants so soon as, after struggling through the difficult pass, they should be delivered into his hands. On the contrary, it was obvious at a glance that his object was still to escape. The heath of Tiel, on which Spaniards, Italians, Walloons, Germans, Dutchmen, English, Scotch, and Irishmen now all found themselves together, was a ridgy, spongy expanse of country, bordered on one side by the swollen river, here flowing again through steeper banks which were overgrown with alders and pollard willows. Along the left of the Spanish army, as they moved in the direction of Herenthals, was a continuous fringe of scrub-oaks, intermixed with tall beeches, skirting the heath, and forming a leafless but almost impervious screen for the movements of small detachments of troops. Quite at the termination of the open space, these thickets becoming closely crowded, overhung another extremely narrow passage, which formed the only outlet from the plain. Thus the heath of Tiel, upon that winter's morning, had but a single entrance and a single exit, each very dangerous or very fortunate for those capable of taking or neglecting the advantages offered by the position.

The whole force of Varax, at least five thousand strong, was advancing in close marching order towards the narrow passage by which only they could emerge from the heath. Should they reach this point in time, and thus effect their escape, it would be useless to attempt to follow them, for, as was the case with the first defile, it was not possible for two abreast to go through, while beyond was a swampy country in which military operations were impossible. Yet there

remained less than half a league's space for the retreating soldiers to traverse, while not a single foot-soldier of Maurice's army had thus far made his appearance on the heath. All were still wallowing and struggling, single file, in the marshy entrance, through which only the cavalry had forced their way. Here was a dilemma. Should Maurice look calmly on while the enemy, whom he had made so painful a forced march to meet, moved off out of reach before his eyes? Yet certainly this was no slight triumph in itself. There sat the stadholder on his horse at the head of eight hundred carabineers, and there marched four of Philip's best infantry regiments, garnished with some of his most renowned cavalry squadrons, anxious not to seek but to avoid a combat. First came the Germans of Count Sultz, the musketeers in front, and the spearsmen, of which the bulk of this and of all the regiments was composed, marching in closely serried squares, with the company standards waving over each. Next, arranged in the same manner, came the Walloon regiments of Hachicourt and of La Barlotte. Fourth and last came the famous Neapolitans of Marquis Trevico. The cavalry squadrons rode on the left of the infantry, and were commanded by Nicolas Basta, a man who had been trampling upon the Netherlanders ever since the days of Alva, with whom he had first come to the country.

And these were the legions—these very men or their immediate predecessors—these Italians, Spaniards, Germans, and Walloons, who during so many terrible years had stormed and sacked almost every city of the Netherlands, and swept over the whole breadth of those little provinces as with the besom of destruction.

Both infantry and cavalry, that picked little army of Varax was of the very best that had shared in the devil's work which had been the chief industry practised for so long in the obedient Netherlands. Was it not madness for the stadholder, at the head of eight hundred horsemen, to assail such an army as this? Was it not to invoke upon his head the swift vengeance of Heaven? Nevertheless, the painstaking,

cautious Maurice did not hesitate. He ordered Hohenlo, with all the Brabantine cavalry, to ride as rapidly as their horses could carry them along the edge of the plain, and behind the tangled woodland, by which the movement would be concealed. He was at all hazards to intercept the enemy's vanguard before it should reach the fatal pass. Vere and Marcellus Bax meanwhile, supported now by Edmont with the Nymegen squadrons, were to threaten the Spanish rear. A company of two under Laurentz was kept by Maurice near his person in reserve.

The Spaniards steadily continued their march, but as they became aware of certain slight and indefinite movements on their left, their cavalry, changing their position, were transferred from the right to the left of the line of march, and now rode between the infantry and the belt of woods.

In a few minutes after the orders given to Hohenlo, that dashing soldier had circumvented the Spaniards, and emerged upon the plain between them and the entrance to the defile, The next instant the trumpets sounded a charge, and Hohenlo fell upon the foremost regiment, that of Sultz, while the rearguard, consisting of Trevico's Neapolitan regiment, was assailed by Du Bois, Donck, Rysoir, Marcellus Bax, and Sir Francis Vere. The effect seemed almost supernatural. The Spanish cavalry—those far-famed squadrons of Guzman and Basta—broke at the first onset and galloped off for the pass as if they had been riding a race. Most of them escaped through the hollow into the morass beyond. The musketeers of Sultz's regiment hardly fired a shot, and fell back in confusion upon the thickly clustered pikemen. The assailants, every one of them in complete armour, on powerful horses, and armed not with lances but with carbines, trampled over the panic-struck and struggling masses of leather-jerkined pikemen and shot them at arm's length. The charge upon Trevico's men at the same moment was just as decisive. In less time than it took afterwards to describe the scene, those renowned veterans were broken into a helpless mass of dying, wounded, or fugitive creatures, incapable of striking a blow.

Thus the Germans in the front and the Neapolitans in the rear had been simultaneously shattered, and rolled together upon the two other regiments, those of Hachicourt and La Barlotte, which were placed between them. Nor did these troops offer any better resistance, but were paralysed and hurled out of existence like the rest. In less than an hour the Spanish army was demolished. Varax himself lay dead upon the field, too fortunate not to survive his disgrace. It was hardly more than daylight on that dull January morning; nine o'clock had scarce chimed from the old brick steeples of Turnhout, yet two thousand Spaniards had fallen before the blows of eight hundred Netherlanders, and there were five hundred prisoners beside. Of Maurice's army not more than nine or ten were slain. The story sounds like a wild legend. It was as if the arm of each Netherlander had been nerved by the memory of fifty years of outrage, as if the spectre of their half-century of crime had appalled the soul of every Spaniard. Like a thunderbolt the son of William the Silent smote that army of Philip, and in an instant it lay blasted on the heath of Tiel. At least it could hardly be called sagacious generalship on the part of the stadholder. The chances were all against him, and if instead of Varax those legions had been commanded that morning by old Christopher Mondragon, there might perhaps have been another tale to tell. Even as it was, there had been a supreme moment when the Spanish disaster had nearly been changed to victory. The fight was almost done, when a small party of States' cavalry, who at the beginning of the action had followed the enemy's horse in its sudden retreat through the gap, came whirling back over the plain in wild confusion, pursued by about forty of the enemy's lancers. They swept by the spot where Maurice, with not more than ten horsemen around him, was directing and watching the battle, and in vain the prince threw himself in front of them and strove to check their flight. They were panic-struck, and Maurice would himself have been swept off the field, had not Marcellus Bax and Edmont, with half a dozen heavy troopers, come to

the rescue. A grave error had been committed by Parker, who, upon being ordered by Maurice to cause Louis Laurentz to charge, had himself charged with the whole reserve and left the stadholder almost alone upon the field. Thus the culprits—who after pursuing the Spanish cavalry through the pass had been plundering the enemy's baggage until they were set upon by the handful left to guard it, and had become fugitives in their turn—might possibly have caused the loss of the day after the victory had been won, had there been a man on the Spanish side to take in the situation at a glance. But it is probable that the rout had been too absolute to allow of any such sudden turning to account of the serious errors of the victors. The cavalry, except this handful, had long disappeared, at least half the infantry lay dead or wounded in the field, while the remainder, throwing away pipe and matchlock, were running helter-skelter for their lives.

Besides Prince Maurice himself, to whom the chief credit of the whole expedition justly belonged, nearly all the commanders engaged obtained great distinction by their skill and valour. Sir Francis Vere, as usual, was ever foremost in the thickest of the fray, and had a horse killed under him. Parker erred by too much readiness to engage, but bore himself manfully throughout the battle. Hohenlo, Solms, Sidney, Louis Laurentz, Du Bois, all displayed their usual prowess; but the real hero of the hour, the personal embodiment of the fortunate madness which prompted and won the battle, was undoubtedly Marcellus Bax.[1]

Maurice remained an hour or two on the field of battle, and then, returning towards the village of Turnhout, summoned its stronghold. The garrison of sixty, under Captain Van der Delf, instantly surrendered. The victor allowed

[1] I place together in one note the authorities used by me for this famous action. Not an incident is mentioned that is not vouched for by one or more of the contemporary chronicles or letter-writers cited, but I have not thought it necessary to encumber each paragraph with reference to a footnote. Bor, IV. 301–304. Meteren, 393, 394. Bentivoglio, 443, 444. Reyd, 302, *seqq* Carnero, 402–407. Coloma, 237. Albert to Philip, 30 Jan. 1597. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Van der Kemp, ii. 25–29, 167–171.

these troops to go off scot free, saying that there had been blood enough shed that day. Every standard borne by the Spaniards in the battle—thirty-eight in number—was taken, besides nearly all their arms. The banners were sent to the Hague to be hung up in the great hall of the castle. The dead body of Varax was sent to the archduke with a courteous letter, in which, however, a categorical explanation was demanded as to a statement in circulation that Albert had decided to give the soldiers of the republic no quarter.[2]

No answer being immediately returned, Maurice ordered the five hundred prisoners to be hanged or drowned unless ransomed within twenty days, and this horrible decree appears from official documents to be consistent with the military usages of the period. The arrival of the letter from the cardinal-archduke, who levied the money for the ransom on the villagers of Brabant,[3] prevented, however, the execution of the menace, which could hardly have been seriously intended.[4]

Within a week from the time of his departure from the Hague to engage in this daring adventure, the stadholder had returned to that little capital, having achieved a complete

[2] The letter of Maurice was as follows:—

"SIR—I had intended to send the soldiers who were taken prisoners yesterday, and to manifest the same courtesy which I am accustomed to show towards those who fall into my hands. But as I have been apprized that your Highness has published an order, according to which military commanders are forbidden henceforth to give quarter to those of this side, I have desired first to have this doubt made clear to me, before I permit them to go free, in order that, having understood your Highness's intention on this point, I may conduct myself as I shall find most fitting. Herewith I humbly kiss the hands of your Highness, and pray God to give you long and healthy life.

"*Turnhout*, 25 *January*, 1597."

The archduke thus replied:—

"COUNT—I have received your letter, and can do no otherwise than praise the courtesy which you have manifested towards the dead body of the late Count Varax, and signify to you the thanks which you deserve, and which I render you from my heart. Touching the other point you will not find that I have thus far resolved on keeping no quarter, and I hope never to have occasion for such a determination, inasmuch as to do so is against my nature. And, inasmuch as in this conjuncture you use the courtesy towards me which you signify in your letter, I shall take care to do the same when occasions present themselves. And herewith I pray the Creator to have you in his holy keeping.

"Your good friend,

"ALBERT, Cardinal.

"*Brussels*, 28 *Jan.* 1597."

[3] Meteren, b. xix. 394.

[4] Ibid. Van der Kemp, 28, 171, who cites Resol. St. Gen. 18 May, 1599, for an example.

success. The enthusiastic demonstrations throughout the land on account of so signal a victory can easily be imagined. Nothing like this had ever before been recorded in the archives of the young commonwealth. There had been glorious defences of beleaguered cities, where scenes of heroic endurance and self-sacrifice had been enacted, such as never can be forgotten so long as the history of human liberty shall endure, but a victory won in the open field over the most famous legions of Spain and against overwhelming numbers, was an achievement entirely without example. It is beyond all doubt that the force under Varax was at least four times as large as that portion of the States' army which alone was engaged; for Maurice had not a foot-soldier on the field until the battle was over, save the handful of musketeers who had followed Vere and Bax at the beginning of the action.

Therefore it is that this remarkable action merits a much more attentive consideration than it might deserve, regarded purely as a military exploit. To the military student a mere cavalry affair, fought out upon an obscure Brabantine heath between a party of Dutch carabineers and Spanish pikemen, may seem of little account—a subject fitted by picturesque costume and animated action for the pencil of a Wouvermanns or a Terburg, but conveying little instruction. As illustrating a period of transition in which heavy armoured troopers—each one a human iron-clad fortress moving at speed and furnished with the most formidable portable artillery then known—could overcome the resistance of almost any number of foot-soldiers in light marching gear and armed with the antiquated pike, the affair may be worthy of a moment's attention; and for this improvement—itself now as obsolete as the slings and cataphracts of Roman legions—the world was indebted to Maurice. But the shock of mighty armies, the manœuvring of vast masses in one magnificent combination, by which the fate of empires, the happiness or the misery of the peoples for generations, may perhaps be decided in a few hours, undoubtedly require a higher constructive genius than could be displayed in any

such hand-to-hand encounter as that of Turnhout, scientifically managed as it unquestionably was. The true and abiding interest of the battle is derived from its moral effect, from its influence on the people of the Netherlands. And this could scarcely be exaggerated. The nation was electrified, transformed in an instant. Who now should henceforth dare to say that one Spanish fighting-man was equal to five or ten Hollanders? At last the days of Jemmingen and Mooker-heath needed no longer to be remembered by every patriot with a shudder of shame. Here at least in the open field a Spanish army, after in vain refusing a combat and endeavouring to escape, had literally bitten the dust before one fourth of its own number. And this effect was a permanent one. Thenceforth for foreign powers to talk of mediation between the republic and the ancient master, to suggest schemes of reconciliation and of a return to obedience, was to offer gratuitous and trivial insult, and we shall very soon have occasion to mark the simple eloquence with which the thirty-eight Spanish standards of Turnhout, hung up in the old hall of the Hague, were made to reply to the pompous rhetoric of an interfering ambassador.

This brief episode was not immediately followed by other military events of importance in the provinces during what remained of the winter. Very early in the spring, however, it was probable that the campaign might open simultaneously in France and on the frontiers of Flanders. Of all the cities in the north of France there was none, after Rouen, so important, so populous, so wealthy as Amiens. Situate in fertile fields, within three days march of Paris, with no intervening forests or other impediments of a physical nature to free communication, it was the key to the gates of the capital. It had no garrison, for the population numbered fifteen thousand men able to bear arms, and the inhabitants valued themselves on the prowess of their trained militiamen, five thousand of whom they boasted to be able to bring into the field at an hour's notice—and they were perfectly loyal to Henry.

One morning in March there came a party of peasants, fifteen or twenty in number, laden with sacks of chestnuts and walnuts, to the northernmost gate of the town. They offered them for sale, as usual, to the soldiers at the guard-house, and chaffered and jested—as boors and soldiers are wont to do—over their wares. It so happened that in the course of the bargaining one of the bags became untied, and its contents, much to the dissatisfaction of the proprietor, were emptied on the ground. There was a scramble for the walnuts, and much shouting, kicking, and squabbling ensued, growing almost into a quarrel between the burgher-soldiers and the peasants. As the altercation was at its height a heavy wagon, laden with long planks, came towards the gate for the use of carpenters and architects within the town. The portcullis was drawn up to admit this lumbering vehicle, but in the confusion caused by the chance medley going on at the guard-house, the gate dropped again before the wagon had fairly got through the passage, and remained resting upon the timber with which it was piled. 11 March, 1597.

At that instant a shrill whistle was heard, and as if by magic the twenty chestnut-selling peasants were suddenly transformed to Spanish and Walloon soldiers armed to the teeth, who were presently reinforced by as many more of their comrades, who sprang from beneath the plank-work by which the real contents of the wagon had thus been screened. Captain Dognano, his brother the sergeant-major, Captain d'Arco, and other officers of a Walloon regiment stationed in Dourlans, were the leaders of the little party, and while they were busily occupied in putting the soldiers of the watch, thus taken unawares, to death, the master-spirit of the whole adventure suddenly made his appearance and entered the city at the head of fifteen hundred men. This was an extremely small, yellow, dried up, energetic Spanish captain,[5] with a long red beard, Hernan Tello de Porto Carrero by name, governor of the neighbouring city of Dourlens, who

[5] Coloma, 262.

had conceived this plan for obtaining possession of Amiens. Having sent these disguised soldiers on before him, he had passed the night with his men in ambush until the signal should sound. The burghers of the town were mostly in church ; none were dreaming of an attack, as men rarely do—for otherwise how should they ever be surprised—and in half an hour Amiens was the property of Philip of Spain. There were not very many lives lost, for the resistance was small, but great numbers were tortured for ransom and few women escaped outrage. The sack was famous, for the city was rich and the captors were few in number, so that each soldier had two or three houses to plunder for his own profit.

When the work was done, the faubourgs were all destroyed, for it was the intention of the conquerors to occupy the place, which would be a most convenient basis of operations for any attack upon Paris, and it was desirable to contract the limits to be defended. Fifteen hundred houses, many of them beautiful villas surrounded with orchards and pleasure gardens, were soon in flames, and afterwards razed to the ground. The governor of the place, Count St. Pol, managed to effect his escape. His place was now supplied by the Marquis of Montenegro, an Italian in the service of the Spanish king. Such was the fate of Amiens in the month of March, 1597[6]; such the result of the refusal by the citizens to accept the garrison urged upon them by Henry.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the consternation produced throughout France by this astounding and altogether unlooked for event. "It seemed," said President De Thou, "as if it had extinguished in a moment the royal majesty and the French name." A few nights later than the date of this occurrence, Maximilian de Bethune[7] (afterwards Duke of Sully, but then called Marquis de Rosny) was asleep in his bed in Paris. He had returned, at past two o'clock in the morning, from a magnificent ball given by the Constable of

[6] Bor, IV. 314, 315. Meteren, 395, 396. Bentivoglio, 447. Coloma, 238–262. De Thou, xiii. 103–109, 118. Albert to Philip, 14 March, 1597. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

[7] De Thou, *ubi sup.* 109.

France. The capital had been uncommonly brilliant during the winter with banquets and dances, tourneys and masquerades, as if to cast a lurid glare over the unutterable misery of the people and the complete desolation of the country; but this entertainment—given by Montmorency in honour of a fair dame with whom he supposed himself desperately in love, the young bride of a very ancient courtier—surpassed in splendour every festival that had been heard of for years. De Bethune had hardly lost himself in slumber when he was startled by Beringen, who, on drawing his curtains in this dead hour of the night, presented such a ghastly visage that the faithful friend of Henry instantly imagined some personal disaster to his well-beloved sovereign. "Is the King dead?" he cried.[8]

Being re-assured as to this point and told to hasten to the Louvre, Rosny instantly complied with the command. When he reached the palace he was admitted at once to the royal bed-chamber, where he found the king in the most unsophisticated of costumes, striding up and down the room, with his hands clasped together behind his head, and with an expression of agony upon his face. Many courtiers were assembled there, stuck all of them like images against the wall, staring before them in helpless perplexity.[9]

Henry rushed forward as Rosny entered, and wringing him by the hand, exclaimed, "Ah, my friend, what a misfortune, Amiens is taken!"

"Very well," replied the financier, with unperturbed visage; "I have just completed a plan which will restore to your Majesty not only Amiens but many other places."

The king drew a great sigh of relief and asked for his project. Rosny, saying that he would instantly go and fetch his papers, left the apartment for an interval, in order to give vent to the horrible agitation which he had been enduring and so bravely concealing ever since the fatal words had been spoken. That a city so important, the key to Paris, without a moment's warning, without the semblance of a siege, should

[8] Sully, Mémoires, i. 484, *seqq.* [9] Ibid.

thus fall into the hands of the enemy, was a blow as directly to the heart of De Bethune as it could have been to any other of Henry's adherents. But while they had been distracting the king by unavailing curses or wailings, Henry, who had received the intelligence just as he was getting into bed, had sent for support and consolation to the tried friend of years, and he now reproachfully contrasted their pusillanimity with De Rosny's fortitude.

A great plan for reorganising the finances of the kingdom was that very night submitted by Rosny to the king, and it was wrought upon day by day thereafter until it was carried into effect.

It must be confessed that the crudities and immoralities which the project revealed do not inspire the political student of modern days with so high a conception of the financial genius of the great minister as his calm and heroic deportment on trying occasions, whether on the battle-field or in the council-chamber, does of his natural authority over his fellow-men. The scheme was devised to put money in the king's coffers, which at that moment were completely empty. Its chief features were to create a great many new offices in the various courts of justice and tribunals of administration, all to be disposed of by sale to the highest bidder ; to extort a considerable loan from the chief courtiers and from the richest burghers in the principal towns ; to compel all the leading peculators—whose name in the public service was legion—to disgorge a portion of their ill-gotten gains, on being released from prosecution ; and to increase the tax upon salt.[10]

Such a project hardly seems a masterpiece of ethics or political economy, but it was hailed with rapture by the needy monarch. At once there was a wild excitement amongst the jobbers and speculators in places. The creation of an indefinite number of new judgeships and magistracies, to be disposed of at auction, was a tempting opportunity even in that age of corruption. One of the most notorious

[10] Sully, Mémoires, i. lib. ix. p. 485, *seqq.*

traders in the judicial ermine, limping Robin de Tours by name, at once made a private visit to Madame de Rosny and offered seventy-two thousand crowns for the exclusive right to distribute these new offices. If this could be managed to his satisfaction, he promised to give her a diamond worth two thousand crowns, and another, worth six thousand, to her husband. The wife of the great minister, who did not comprehend the whole amount of the insult, presented Robin to her husband. She was enlightened, however, as to the barefaced iniquity of the offer, when she heard De Bethune's indignant reply, and saw the jobber limp away, crest-fallen and amazed. That a financier or a magistrate should decline a bribe or interfere with the private sale of places, which were after all objects of merchandise, was to him incomprehensible. The industrious Robin, accordingly, recovering from his discomfiture, went straightway to the chancellor, and concluded the same bargain in the council chamber which had been rejected by De Bethune, with the slight difference that the distribution of the places was assigned to the speculator for seventy-five thousand instead of seventy-two thousand crowns. It was with great difficulty that De Bethune, who went at once to the king with complaints and insinuations as to the cleanness of the chancellor's hands, was able to cancel the operation.[11] The day was fast approaching when the universal impoverishment of the great nobles and landholders—the result of the long, hideous, senseless massacres called the wars of religion—was to open the way for the labouring classes to acquire a property in the soil. Thus that famous fowl in every pot was to make its appearance, which vulgar tradition ascribes to the bounty of a king who hated everything like popular rights, and loved nothing but his own glory and his own amusement. It was not until the days of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren that Privilege could renew those horrible outrages on the People, which were to be avenged by a dread series of wars, massacres, and crimes, compared to

[11] Sully, Mémoires, i. lib. ix. p. 490.

which even the religious conflicts of the sixteenth century grow pale.

Meantime De Bethune comforted his master with these financial plans, and assured him in the spirit of prophecy that the King of Spain, now tottering as it was thought to his grave, would soon be glad to make a favourable peace with France, even if he felt obliged to restore not only Amiens but every other city or stronghold that he had ever conquered in that kingdom. Time would soon show whether this prediction were correct or delusive ; but while the secret negotiations between Henry and the Pope were vigorously proceeding for that peace with Spain which the world in general and the commonwealth of the Netherlands in particular thought to be farthest from the warlike king's wishes, it was necessary to set about the siege of Amiens.

Henry assembled a force of some twelve or fifteen thousand men for that purpose, while the cardinal-archduke, upon his part, did his best to put an army in the field in order to relieve the threatened city so recently acquired by a coarse but successful artifice.

But Albert was in even a worse plight than that in which his great antagonist found himself. When he had first arrived in the provinces, his exchequer was overflowing, and he was even supposed to devote a considerable portion of the military funds to defray the expenses of his magnificent housekeeping at Brussels.[12] But those halcyon days were over. A gigantic fraud, just perpetrated by Philip, had descended like a thunderbolt upon the provinces and upon all commercial Europe, and had utterly blasted the unfortunate viceroy. In the latter days of the preceding year the king had issued a general repudiation of his debts.

He did it solemnly, too, and with great religious unction, for it was a peculiarity of this remarkable sovereign that he

[12] "Non possiede l' amore di quei popoli quanto bisognerebbe, oltrecchè ha nome di non favorir molto la soldatesca e di gettar gran parte di denaro che doverebbe esser distribuito alle milizie in quelli della sua propria casa e nel sostentar la propria albagia. Da che nasce poi che si veggono tante sollevazioni e le cose di quella guerra prendono sempre peggior piega."—Soranzo. Relazione, before cited, p. 168.

was ever wont to accomplish his darkest crimes, whether murders or stratagems, as if they were acts of virtue. Perhaps he really believed them to be such, for a man, before whom so many millions of his fellow worms had been writhing for half a century in the dust, might well imagine himself a deity.

So the king, on the 20th November, 1596, had publicly revoked all the assignments, mortgages, and other deeds by which the royal domains, revenues, taxes, and other public property had been transferred or pledged for moneys already advanced to merchants, bankers, and other companies or individuals, and formally took them again into his own possession, on the ground that his exertions in carrying on this long war to save Christianity from destruction had reduced him to beggary, while the money-lenders, by charging him exorbitant interest, had all grown rich at his expense.[13]

[13] "Whereas it has come to our knowledge," so ran this famous proclamation of repudiation in its principal paragraphs, "that notwithstanding all which our royal incomes from this monarchy and from without have yielded; together with the assistance rendered to us by his Holiness to maintain the war against the English, and to protect the Catholic religion, and with the steady burthens borne for this object by the subjects and vassals of the crown, according to their ancient and great fidelity; and besides the great abundance of the gold and silver produced by our Indies; likewise all that has come from the sums furnished by the farmers of our finances and revenues, we find ourselves now so wholly exhausted and ruined, and our royal inherited estates so diminished, and as it were reduced to nothing, that, although the foremost cause of this ruin is the great and incredible expense which we have sustained and are still enduring for the protection of Christendom, of our kingdom and domains; other chief causes are the grievous damages, discounts, and interest which have been forced upon us, and which at present obtain in the finances, bills of exchange, and other obligations, which have been made and taken up in our name, since we could not escape the same in order to be able to provide for our so entirely necessary and pressing necessities. Thus all our domains, taxes, revenues, and all ordinary and extraordinary resources stand, burthened and covered with obligations in the hands of merchants. And what is most oppressive, our affairs are come to extremities through our having no means by which we might help ourselves, nor do we know of any other resources that we can make use of. And now the said merchants, who hitherto have given on bills of exchange such monies as were necessary to provide for the protection of our royal state and to carry on the war which we are waging for these righteous and special reasons, refuse to do this any longer, and make difficulties in further dealing with us, seeing that they have in their own hands and power all the royal revenues by means of the said pledges, certificates, and transfers, and hereby such embarrassments arise that if they are not provided against, it would be enough to put in hazard all that which God the Lord has so highly commanded us to perform, namely, the protection and maintenance of the Catholic Church, of our subjects and vassals

This was perfectly simple. There was no attempt to disguise the villany of the transaction. The massacre of so many millions of Protestants, the gigantic but puerile attempts to subjugate the Dutch republic, and to annex France, England, and the German empire to his hereditary dominions, had been attended with more expense than Philip had calculated upon. The enormous wealth which a long series of marriages, inheritances, conquests, and maritime discoveries had heaped upon Spain had been exhausted by the insane ambition of the king to exterminate heresy throughout the world, and to make himself the sovereign of one undivided, universal, catholic monarchy. All the gold and silver of America had not sufficed for this purpose, and he had seen, with an ever rising indignation, those very precious metals

and all those who dwell under our government. . . . .

"Therefore to put an end to such financiering and unhallowed practices with bills of exchange which have been introduced and have spread abroad among so many people, who in order to follow such pursuits have abandoned agriculture, cattle-raising, and mechanical works, and embarked in trade, finding therein gain and profit to the disservice of the Lord God and of us, with great injury to our kingdom. . . . . and which have brought great masses of coin and species to flow out of India (*i. e.* America) into the kingdoms and lands of the rebels and foes of Christianity and of us, enabling them to keep every thing in commotion, so that we are compelled to increase our armaments and our forces, and to incur more expenses. We have now given command to devise some means of restoring order, and of accomplishing in the best possible way that which we are so highly and legally bound to do, whereupon hang the protection of Christendom and the security of our realms; and we have found no other remedy than to call in and to disburthen our royal incomes, liberating the same from the unjust damage put upon them through this financiering and bills of exchange, which we have suffered and are continuing to suffer at the time we made such contracts, in order to avoid still greater embarrassments that would have arisen had there been want of provision for our military affairs. . . . . Having decided to cancel and annihilate all the aforesaid interests and impositions, we shall afterwards meditate upon ways and means by which may be paid to the merchants and traders what may seem to us properly due to them in regard to these contracts, transfers, and assignments. . . . . Accordingly we suspend and declare suspended all such assignations made by us in any manner whatsoever since Sept. 1, 1575, and Dec. 1, 1577, unto this date, to the said merchants and traders, whether of taxes, gifts, domains, rents, or any other property or revenues whatsoever, on account of such bills of exchange or other advances. And we order the monies coming from such pledged property to be henceforth paid into our royal treasury, for the support of our own necessities, declaring from this day forth all payments otherwise made to be null and void.

"20 *November*, 1596."

Bor, III. 318, 319. Herrera, iii. 711, *seqq.* Compare Reyd, 301, 302. Meteren, 388–391. It was found necessary after the expiration of a year to revoke these orders, as the usual consequences of repudiation followed.

which, in his ignorance of the laws of trade, he considered his exclusive property flowing speedily into the coffers of the merchants of Europe, especially those of the hated commonwealth of the rebellious Netherlands.

Therefore he solemnly renounced all his contracts, and took God to witness that it was to serve His Divine will.[14] How else could he hope to continue his massacre of the Protestants ?

The effect of the promulgation of this measure was instantaneous. Two millions and a half of bills of exchange sold by the Cardinal Albert came back in one day protested. The chief merchants and bankers of Europe suspended payment. Their creditors became bankrupt. At the Frankfort fair there were more failures in one day than there had ever been in all the years since Frankfort existed.[15] In Genoa alone a million dollars of interest were confiscated.[16] It was no better in Antwerp ; but Antwerp was already ruined. There was a general howl of indignation and despair upon every exchange, in every counting-room, in every palace, in every cottage of Christendom. Such a tremendous repudiation of national debts was never heard of before. There had been debasements of the currency, petty frauds by kings upon their unfortunate peoples, but such a crime as this had never been conceived by human heart before.

The archduke was fain to pawn his jewelry, his plate, his furniture, to support the daily expenses of his household. Meantime he was to set an army in the field to relieve a city, beleaguered by the most warlike monarch in Christendom. Fortunately for him, that prince was in very similar straits, for the pressure upon the public swindlers and the auction sales of judicial ermine throughout his kingdom were not as rapidly productive as had been hoped.

It was precisely at this moment, too, that an incident of another nature occurred in Antwerp, which did not tend to make the believers in the possibility of religious or

[14] Bor, Herrera, *ubi sup.* [15] Bor, Reyd, *ubi sup.* [16] Ibid.

political freedom more in love with the system of Spain and Rome. Those blood-dripping edicts against heresy in the Netherlands, of which enough has been said in previous volumes of this history, and which had caused the deaths, by axe, faggot, halter, or burial alive, of at least fifty thousand human creatures—however historical scepticism may shut its eyes to evidence—had now been dormant for twenty years. Their activity had ceased with the pacification of Ghent ; but the devilish spirit which had inspired them still lived in the persons of the Jesuits, and there were now more Jesuits in the obedient provinces than there had been for years. We have seen that Champagny's remedy for the ills the country was enduring was "more Jesuits." And this, too, was Albert's recipe. Always more Jesuits.[17] And now the time had come when the Jesuits thought that they might step openly with their works into the daylight again. Of late years they had shrouded themselves in comparative mystery, but from their seminaries and colleges had gone forth a plentiful company of assassins against Elizabeth and Henry, Nassau, Barneveld, and others who, whether avowedly or involuntarily, were prominent in the party of human progress. Some important murders had already been accomplished, and the prospect was fair that still others might follow, if the Jesuits persevered. Meantime those ecclesiastics thought that a wholesome example might be set to humbler heretics by the spectacle of a public execution.

Two maiden ladies lived on the north rampart of Antwerp. They had formerly professed the Protestant religion, and had been thrown into prison for that crime ; but the fear of further persecution, human weakness, or perhaps sincere conviction, had caused them to renounce the error of their ways, and they now went to mass. But they had a maid-servant, forty years of age, Anna van den Hove by name, who was staunch in that reformed faith in which she had been born and bred. The Jesuits denounced this maid-

[17] Albert to Philip, 3 May, 1596. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

servant to the civil authority, and claimed her condemnation and execution under the edicts of 1540, decrees which every one had supposed as obsolete as the statutes of Draco, which they had so entirely put to shame.

The sentence having been obtained from the docile and priest-ridden magistrates, Anna van den Hove was brought to Brussels and informed that she was at once to be buried alive. At the same time, the Jesuits told her that by converting herself to the Church she might escape punishment.[18]

When King Henry IV. was summoned to renounce that same Huguenot faith, of which he was the political embodiment and the military champion, the candid man answered by the simple demand to be instructed. When the proper moment came, the instruction was accomplished by an archbishop with the rapidity of magic. Half an hour undid the work of half a life-time. Thus expeditiously could religious conversion be effected when an earthly crown was its guerdon. The poor serving-maid was less open to conviction. In her simple fanaticism she too talked of a crown, and saw it descending from Heaven on her poor forlorn head as the reward, not of apostasy, but of steadfastness. She asked her tormentors how they could expect her to abandon her religion for fear of death. She had read her Bible every day, she said, and had found nothing there of the pope or purgatory, masses, invocation of saints, or the absolution of sins except through the blood of the blessed Redeemer. She interfered with no one who thought differently; she quarrelled with no one's religious belief. She had prayed for enlightenment from Him, if she were in error, and the result was that she felt strengthened in her simplicty, and resolved to do nothing against her conscience. Rather than add this sin to the manifold ones committed by her, she preferred, she said, to die the death. So Anna van den Hove was led, one fine midsummer morning, to the hay-field outside of Brussels, between two Jesuits, followed by a number of a peculiar kind

[18] Bor, IV. 334, 335. Meteren, 400.

of monks called love-brothers. Those holy men goaded her as she went, telling her that she was the devil's carrion, and calling on her to repent at the last moment, and thus save her life and escape eternal damnation beside. But the poor soul had no ear for them, and cried out that, like Stephen, she saw the heavens opening, and the angels stooping down to conduct her far away from the power of the evil one. When they came to the hay-field they found the pit already dug, and the maid-servant was ordered to descend into it. The executioner then covered her with earth up to the waist, and a last summons was made to her to renounce her errors. She refused, and then the earth was piled upon her, and the hangman jumped upon the grave till it was flattened and firm.[19]

Of all the religious murders done in that hideous sixteenth century in the Netherlands, the burial of the Antwerp servant-maid was the last and the worst. The worst, because it was a cynical and deliberate attempt to revive the demon whose thirst for blood had been at last allayed, and who had sunk into repose. And it was a spasmodic revival only, for, in the provinces at least, that demon had finished his work.

Still, on the eastern borders of what was called civilization, Turk and Christian were contending for the mastery. The great battle of Kovesd had decided nothing, and the crescent still shone over the fortified and most important Hungarian stronghold of Raab, within arm's length of Vienna. How rapidly might that fatal and menacing emblem fill its horns, should it once be planted on the walls of the Imperial capital! It was not wonderful that a sincere impatience should be felt by all the frontier States for the termination of the insurrection of the Netherlands. Would that rebellious and heretical republic only consent to go out of existence, again bow its stubborn knee to Philip and the Pope, what a magnificent campaign might be made against Mahomet! The King of Spain was the only potentate at all comparable

[19] Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

in power to the grand Turk. The King of France, most warlike of men, desired nothing better, as he avowed, than to lead his brave nobles into Hungary to smite the unbelievers. Even Prince Maurice, it was fondly hoped, might be induced to accept a high command in the united armies of Christendom, and seek for glory by campaigning, in alliance with Philip, Rudolph, and Henry, against the Ottoman, rather than against his natural sovereign. Such were the sagacity, the insight, the power of forecasting the future possessed in those days by monarchs, statesmen, and diplomatists who were imagining that they held the world's destiny in their hands.

There was this summer a solemn embassy from the emperor to the States-General proposing mediation referring in the usual conventional phraseology to the right of kings to command, and to the duty of the people to submit, and urging the gentle-mindedness and readiness to forgive which characterised the sovereign of the Netherlands and of Spain.

And the statesmen of the republic had answered as they always did, showing with courteous language, irresistible logic, and at unmerciful length, that there never had been kings in the Netherlands at all, and that the gentle-mindedness of Philip had been exhibited in the massacre of a hundred thousand Netherlanders in various sieges and battles, and in the murder, under the Duke of Alva alone, of twenty thousand human beings by the hangman.[20]

They liked not such divine right nor such gentle-mindedness. They recognised no duty on their part to consent to such a system. Even the friendly King of Denmark sent a legation for a similar purpose, which was respectfully but very decidedly allowed to return as it came;[21] but the most persistent in schemes of interference for the purpose of putting an end to the effusion of blood in the Netherlands was Sigismund of Poland. This monarch, who occupied two very incompatible positions, being sovereign at once of

[20] Bor, IV. 358. [21] Ibid. 376.

fanatically Protestant Sweden and of orthodox Poland, and who was, moreover, son-in-law of Archduke Charles of Styria —whose other daughter was soon to be espoused by the Prince of Spain—was personally and geographically interested in liberating Philip from the inconvenience of his Netherland war. Only thus could he hope to bring the Spanish power to the rescue of Christendom against the Turk. Troubles enough were in store for Sigismund in his hereditary northern realms, and he was to learn that his intermarriage with the great Catholic and Imperial house did not enable him to trample out Protestantism in those hardy Scandinavian and Flemish regions where it had taken secure root. Meantime he despatched, in solemn mission to the republic and to the heretic queen, a diplomatist whose name and whose oratorical efforts have by a caprice of history been allowed to endure to our times.

Paul Dialyn was solemnly received at the Hague on the 21st July.[22] A pragmatical fop, attired in a long, magnificent Polish robe, covered with diamonds and other jewels, he was yet recognised by some of those present as having been several years before a student at Leyden under a different name, and with far less gorgeous surroundings.[23] He took up his position in the council-chamber, in the presence of the stadholder and the leading members of the States-General, and pronounced a long Latin oration, in the manner, as it was said, of a monk delivering a sermon from the pulpit. He kept his eyes steadily fixed on the ceiling, never once looking at the men whom he was addressing, and speaking in a loud, nasal, dictatorial tone, not at all agreeable to the audience. He dwelt in terms of extravagant eulogy on the benignity and gentleness of the King of Spain—qualities in which he asserted that no prince on earth could be compared to him—and he said this to the very face of Maurice of Nassau. That the benignant and gentle king had caused the stadholder's father to be

21 July, 1597.

[22] Bor, IV. 332–334. Reyd, 304–305.

[23] Reyd, *ubi sup.*

assassinated, and that he had rewarded the murderer's family with a patent of nobility, and with an ample revenue taken from the murdered man's property, appeared of no account to the envoy in the full sweep of his rhetoric. Yet the reminiscence caused a shudder of disgust in all who heard him.

He then stated the wish of his master the Polish king to be that, in consideration of the present state of Europe in regard to the Turk, the provinces might reconcile themselves to their natural master, who was the most powerful monarch in Christendom, and the only one able to make head against the common foe. They were solemnly warned of the enormous power and resources of the great king, with whom it was hopeless for them to protract a struggle sure to end at last in their uttermost destruction. It was for kings to issue commands, he said, and for the people to obey ; but Philip was full of sweetness, and would accord them full forgiveness for their manifold sins against him. The wish to come to the rescue of Christendom, in this extreme peril from the Turk, was with him paramount to all other considerations.[24]

Such, in brief, was the substance of the long Latin harangue by which it was thought possible to induce those sturdy republicans and Calvinists to renounce their vigorous national existence and to fall on their knees before the most Catholic king. This was understood to be mediation, statesmanship, diplomacy, in deference to which the world was to pause and the course of events to flow backwards. Truly, despots and their lackeys were destined to learn some rude lessons from that vigorous little commonwealth in the North Sea, before it should have accomplished its mission on earth.

The States-General dissembled their disgust, however, for it was not desirable to make open enemies of Sigismund or Rudolph. They refused to accept a copy of the oration, but they promised to send him a categorical answer to it in writing. Meantime the envoy had the honour of walking

[24] Bor, *ubi sup.*

about the castle with the stadholder, and, in the course of their promenade, Maurice pointed to the thirty-eight standards taken at the battle of Turnhout, which hung from the cedarn rafters of the ancient banquetting hall.[25] The mute eloquence of those tattered banners seemed a not illogical reply to the diplomatic Paul's rhetoric in regard to the hopelessness of a contest with Spanish armies.

Next, Van der Werken—pensionary of Leyden, and a classical scholar—waited upon the envoy with a Latin reply to his harangue, together with a courteous letter for Sigismund. Both documents were scathing denunciations of the policy pursued by the King of Spain and by all his aiders and abettors, and a distinct but polished refusal to listen to a single word in favour of mediation or of peace.

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Paul Dialyn then received a courteous permission to leave the territory of the republic, and was subsequently forwarded in a States' vessel of war to England.

His reception, about a month later, by Queen Elizabeth is an event on which all English historians are fond of dwelling. The pedant, on being presented to that imperious and accomplished sovereign, deported himself with the same ludicrous arrogance which had characterised him at the Hague. His Latin oration, which had been duly drawn up for him by the Chancellor of Sweden, was quite as impertinent as his harangue to the States-General had been, and was delivered with the same conceited air. The queen replied on the instant in the same tongue. She was somewhat in a passion, but spoke with majestic moderation.[26]

"Oh, how I have been deceived!" she exclaimed. "I expected an ambassador, and behold a herald! In all my life I never heard of such an oration. Your boldness and unadvised temerity I cannot sufficiently admire. But if the king your master has given you any such thing in charge —which I much doubt—I believe it is because, being but a

[25] Bor, *ubi sup.*

[26] Camden, 536, 537. Bor, IV. 350. Wright, 'Queen Elizabeth and her Times,' ii. 480.

young man, and lately advanced to the crown, not by ordinary succession of blood, but by election, he understandeth not yet the way of such affairs." And so on for several minutes longer.

Never did envoy receive such a setting down from sovereign.

"God's death, my lords!" said the queen to her ministers, as she concluded, "I have been enforced this day to scour up my old Latin that hath lain long in rusting."[27]

This combination of ready wit, high spirit, and good Latin, justly excited the enthusiasm of the queen's subjects, and endeared her still more to every English heart. It may, however, be doubted whether the famous reply was in reality so entirely extemporaneous as it has usually been considered. The States-General had lost no time in forwarding to England a minute account of the proceedings of Paul Dialyn at the Hague, together with a sketch of his harangue and of the reply on behalf of the States.[28] Her Majesty and her counsellors therefore, knowing that the same envoy was on his way to England with a similar errand, may be supposed to have had leisure to prepare the famous impromptu. Moreover, it is difficult to understand, on the presumption that these classic utterances were purely extemporaneous, how they have kept their place in all chronicles and histories from that day to the present, without change of a word in the text. Surely there was no stenographer present to take down the queen's words as they fell from her lips.

The military events of the year did not testify to a much more successful activity on the part of the new league in the field than it had displayed in the sphere of diplomacy. In vain did the envoy of the republic urge Henry and his counsellors to follow up the crushing blow dealt to the cardinal at Turnhout by vigorous operations in conjunction with the States' forces in Artois and Hainault.[29] For Amiens had

[27] Wright, *ubi sup.* [28] Bor, *ubi sup.*
[29] Calvaert to the States-General, in Deventer, ii. 141, *seqq.*

meantime been taken, and it was now necessary for the king to employ all his energy and all his resources to recover that important city. So much damage to the cause of the republic and of the new league had the little yellow Spanish captain inflicted in an hour, with his bags of chestnuts and walnuts. The siege of Amiens lasted nearly six months, and was the main event of the campaign, so far as Henry was concerned. It is true—as the reader has already seen, and as will soon be more clearly developed—that Henry's heart had been fixed on peace from the moment that he consented in conjunction with the republic to declare war, and that he had entered into secret and separate negotiations for that purpose with the agents of Philip so soon as he had bound himself by solemn covenant with Elizabeth to have no negotiations whatever with him except with her full knowledge and consent.

The siege of Amiens, however, was considered a military masterpiece, and its whole progress showed the revolution which the stadholder of Holland had already effected in European warfare. Henry IV. beleaguered Amiens as if he were a pupil of Maurice, and contemporaries were enthusiastic over the science, the patience, the inventive ingenuity which were at last crowned with success. The heroic Hernan Tello de Porto Carrero was killed in a sortie during the defence of the place which he had so gallantly won, and when the city was surrendered to the king on the 19th of September it was stipulated in the first article of the capitulation that the tomb, epitaph, and trophies, by which his memory was honoured in the principal church, should not be disturbed, and that his body might be removed whenever and whither it seemed good to his sovereign. In vain the cardinal had taken the field with an army of eighteen thousand foot and fifteen hundred light cavalry. The king had learned so well to entrench himself and to moderate his ardour for inopportune pitched battles, that the relieving force could find no occasion to effect its purpose. The archduke retired. He came to Amiens like

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a soldier, said Henry, but he went back like a priest. Moreover, he was obliged to renounce, besides the city, a most tempting prize which he thought that he had secured within the city. Alexander Farnese, in his last French campaign, had procured and sent to his uncle the foot of St. Philip and the head of St. Lawrence; but what was Albert's delight when he learned that in Amiens cathedral there was a large piece of the head of John the Baptist! "There will be a great scandal about it in this kingdom," he wrote to Philip, "if I undertake to transport it out of the country, but I will try to contrive it as your Majesty desires." [30]

Bnt the military events of the year prevented the cardinal from gratifying the king in regard to these choice curiosities.

After the reduction of the city Henry went a considerable distance with his army towards the frontier of Flanders, in order to return, as he said, his cousin's visit.[31] But the recovery of Amiens had placed too winning a card in the secret game which he was then playing to allow him to push his nominal adversary to extremities.

The result, suspected very early in the year by the statesmen of the republic, was already very plainly foreshadowing itself as the winter advanced.

Nor had the other two members of the league effected much in the field. Again an expedition had been fitted forth under Essex against the Spanish coast to return the compliment which Philip had intended with the unlucky armada under Santa Gadea; and again Sir Francis Vere, with two thousand veterans from the Netherlands, and the Dutch admirals, with ten ships of war and a large number of tenders and transports, had faithfully taken part in the adventure.

[30] Albert to Philip, 14 March, 1597. Same to same, 16 Aug. 1597. (Arch. he Sim, MS.)

"Es cosa cierta que está en Amiens gran parte de la cabeza de San Juan Baptista. Aun podria causar en aquel Reyno algun scandalo el tratar de un traslacion pero procurare que se guie como mas convenga conforme a lo que V. Magd. me manda," &c. &c.

[31] For the siege of Amiens, see De Thou, xiii. 109–126. Meteren, 396. Bentivoglio, 458, *seqq.* Carnero, 407, *seqq.*, and especially Coloma, 238–271. Albert to Philip, 30 Sept. 1597. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

The fleet was tempest-tossed for ten days, during which it reached the threatened coast and was blown off again. It returned at last into the English ports, having accomplished nothing, and having expended superfluously a considerable amount of money and trouble. Essex, with a few of the vessels, subsequently made a cruise towards the Azores, but, beyond the capture of a Spanish merchantman or two, gained no glory and inflicted no damage.[32]

Nothing could be feebler than the military operations of the three confederated powers ever since they had so solemnly confederated themselves.

Sick at heart with the political intrigues of his allies, which had brought a paralysis upon his arms which the blows of the enemy could hardly have effected, Maurice took the field in August for an autumnal campaign on the eastern frontier of the republic. Foiled in his efforts for a combined attack by the whole force of the league upon Philip's power in the west, he thought it at least expedient to liberate the Rhine, to secure the important provinces of Zutphen, Gelderland, and Overyssel from attack, and to provide against the dangerous intrigues and concealed warfare carried on by Spain in the territories of the mad Duke of Juliers, Cleves and Berg. For the seeds of the Thirty Years' War of Germany were already sown broadcast in those fatal duchies, and it was the determination of the agents of Spain to acquire the mastery of that most eligible military position, that excellent *sedes belli*, whenever Protestantism was to be assailed in England, the Netherlands, or Germany.

Meantime the Hispaniolated counsellors of Duke John had strangled—as it was strongly suspected—his duchess, who having gone to bed in perfect health one evening was found dead in her bed next morning, with an ugly mark on her throat;[33] and it was now the purpose of these statesmen to find a new bride for their insane sovereign in the ever ready and ever orthodox house of Lorraine.[34] And the Protestant

[32] Bor, IV. 335–337. Camden, 529–535. [33] Reyd, 319. [34] Ibid.

brothers-in-law and nephews and nieces were making every possible combination in order to check such dark designs, and to save these important territories from the ubiquitous power of Spain.

The stadholder had also family troubles at this period. His sister Emilia had conceived a desperate passion for Don Emmanuel, the pauper son of the forlorn pretender to Portugal, Don Antonio, who had at last departed this life. Maurice was indignant that a Catholic, an outcast, and, as it was supposed, a bastard, should dare to mate with the daughter of William of Orange-Nassau; and there were many scenes of tenderness, reproaches, recriminations, and *hysterica passio*, in which not only the lovers, the stadholder and his family, but also the high and mighty States-General, were obliged to enact their parts. The chronicles are filled with the incidents, which, however, never turned to tragedy, nor even to romance, but ended, without a catastrophe, in a rather insipid marriage. The Princess Emilia remained true both to her religion and her husband during a somewhat obscure wedded life, and after her death Don Emmanuel found means to reconcile himself with the King of Spain and to espouse, in second nuptials, a Spanish lady.[35]

On the 4th of August, Maurice arrived at Arnhem with a force of seven thousand foot and twelve hundred horse. Hohenlo was with him, and William Lewis, and there was yet another of the illustrious house of Nassau in the camp, Frederick Henry, a boy in his thirteenth year, the youngest born of William the Silent, the grandson of Admiral de Coligny, now about, in this his first campaign, to take the first step in a long and noble career.[36] 4 Aug. 1597.

Having reduced the town and castle of Alphen, the stadholder came before Rheinberg, which he very expeditiously invested. During a preliminary skirmish William Lewis received a wound in the leg, while during the brief siege

[35] Bor, IV. 322–324. Van der Kemp, ii. 36–40, 182–194.
[36] Van der Kemp, ii. 31, 32.

Maurice had a narrow escape from death, a cannon-ball passing through his tent and over his head as he lay taking a brief repose upon his couch.[37]

On the 19th, Rheinberg, the key to that portion of the river, surrendered. On the 31st the stadholder opened his batteries upon the city of Meurs, which capitulated on the 2nd of September; the commandant, Andrew Miranda, stipulating that he should carry off an old fifty-pounder, the only piece of cannon in the place. Maurice gave his permission with a laugh, begging Miranda not to batter down any cities with his big gun.[38]

19 Aug. 1597.

On the 8th September the stadholder threw a bridge over the Rhine, and crossing that river and the Lippe, came on the 11th before Grol. There was no Christopher Mondragon now in his path to check his progress and spoil his campaign, so that in seventeen days the city, being completely surrounded with galleries and covered ways up to its walls, surrendered. Count van Stirum, royal governor of the place, dined with the stadholder on that day, and the garrison, from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred strong, together with such of the townsfolk as chose to be subjects of Philip rather than citizens of the republic, were permitted to depart in peace.[39]

On the 9th October the town and castle of Brevoort were taken by storm and the town was burned.[40]

On the 18th October, Maurice having summoned Enschede, the commandant requested permission to examine the artillery by which it was proposed to reduce the city. Leave being granted, two captains were deputed accordingly as inspectors, who reported that resistance was useless. The place accordingly capitulated at once.[41]

Here, again, was an improvement on the heroic practice of Alva and Romero.

On the 21st and 22nd October, Ootmarsum and Oldenzaal

[37] Bor, IV. 345. Van der Kemp, ii. 32.
[38] Reyd, xiv. 312. [39] Bor, IV. 349. Meteren. 411–417.
[40] Ibid. [41] Letter of Maurice, in Van der Kemp, ii. 180.

were taken, and on the 28th the little army came before Lingen. This important city surrendered after a fortnight's siege.

Thus closed a sagacious, business-like, three-months' campaign, in the course of which the stadholder, although with a slender force, had by means of his excellent organization and his profound practical science, achieved very considerable results. He had taken nine strongly-fortified cities and five castles, opened the navigation of the Rhine, and strengthened the whole eastern bulwarks of the republic.[42] He was censured by the superficial critics of the old school for his humanity towards the conquered garrisons. At least it was thought quite superfluous to let these Spanish soldiers go scot free. Five thousand veterans had thus been liberated to swell the ranks of the cardinal's army, but the result soon proved the policy of Maurice to be, in many ways, wholesome. The great repudiation by Philip, and the consequent bankruptcy of Albert, converted large numbers of the royal troops into mutineers, and these garrisons from the eastern frontier were glad to join in the game.

After the successful siege of Hulst in the previous year the cardinal had reduced the formidable mutiny which had organized itself at Tirlemont and Chapelle in the days of his luckless predecessor. Those rebels had been paid off and had mainly returned to Italy and other lands to spend their money. But soon a new rebellion in all the customary forms established itself in Antwerp citadel during the temporary absence of Mexia, the governor, and great was the misery of the unhappy burghers thus placed at the mercy of the guns of that famous pentagon. They were obliged to furnish large sums to the whole garrison, paying every common foot-soldier twelve stivers a day and the officers in proportion, while the great Eletto demanded, beside his salary, a coach and six, a state bed with satin curtains and fine linen, and the materials for banquetting sumptuously every day.[43] At the slightest

[42] Bor, IV. 345–368. Van der Kemp, ii. 31–35, 177, *seqq.* Meteren, *ubi sup.*
[43] Bor, IV. 468.

demur to these demands the bombardment from the citadel would begin, and the accurate artillery practice of those experienced cannoneers soon convinced the loyal citizens of the propriety of the arrangement.[44] The example spread. The garrison of Ghent broke into open revolt, and a general military rebellion lasted for more than a year.

While the loyal cities of the obedient provinces were thus enjoying the fruits of their loyalty and obedience, the rebellious capital of the republic was receiving its stadholder with exuberant demonstrations of gratitude. The year, begun with the signal victory of Turnhout, had worthily terminated, so far as military events were concerned, with the autumnal campaign on the Rhine, and great were the rejoicings throughout the little commonwealth.

Thus, with diminished resources, had the republic been doing its share of the work which the anti-Spanish league had been called into existence to accomplish. But, as already intimated, this league was a mere fraud upon the Netherlands, which their statesmen were not slow in discovering. Of course it was the object of Philip and of the pope to destroy this formidable triple alliance as soon as formed, and they found potent assistance, not only in Henry's counsellors, but in the bosom of that crafty monarch himself. Clement hated Philip as much as he feared him, so that the prospect both of obtaining Henry as a counterpoise to his own most oppressive and most Catholic protector, and of breaking up the great convert's alliance with the heretic queen and the rebellious republic, was a most tempting one to his Holiness. Therefore he employed, indefatigably, the matchless powers of intrigue possessed by Rome to effect this great purpose. As for Elizabeth, she was weary of the war, most anxious to be reimbursed her advances to the States, and profoundly jealous of the rising commercial and naval greatness of the new commonwealth. If the league therefore proved impotent from the beginning, certainly it was not the fault of the

[44] Bor, IV. 468.

United Netherlands. We have seen how much the king deplored, in intimate conversation with De Bethune,[45] his formal declaration of war against Spain which the Dutch diplomatists had induced him to make; and indeed nothing can be more certain than that this public declaration of war, and this solemn formation of the triple alliance against Philip, were instantly accompanied on Henry's part by secret peace negotiations with Philip's agents. Villeroy told Envoy Calvaert that as for himself he always trembled when he thought on what he had done, in seconding the will of his Majesty in that declaration at the instance of the States-General, of which measure so many losses and such bitter fruits had been the result.[46] He complained, too, of the little assistance or co-operation yielded by England.[47] Calvaert replied that he had nothing to say in defence of England,[48] but that certainly the king could have no cause to censure the States. The republic, however, had good ground, he said, to complain that nothing had been done by France, that all favourable occasions had been neglected, and that there was a perpetual change of counsels. The envoy especially, and justly, reproached the royal government for having taken no advantage of the opportunity offered by the victory of Turnhout, in which the republic had utterly defeated the principal forces of the common enemy. He bluntly remarked, too, that the mysterious comings and goings of Balvena had naturally excited suspicions in the Netherlands, and that it would be better that all such practices should be at once abandoned. They did his Majesty no service, and it was no wonder that they caused uneasiness to his allies. Villeroy replied that the king had good reasons to give satisfaction to those who were yearning for peace.[49]

As Henry himself was yearning in this regard as much as any of his subjects, it was natural enough that he should listen to Balvena and all other informal negotiators whom

[45] *Antea.* *Vide* Sully, Mémoires I. viii. 412. Van Deventer, ii. 142.
[46] Calvaert's letter, in Deventer, ii. 141–146.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid. "Dat ick England daer liet."
[49] Ibid.

Cardinal Albert might send from Brussels or Clement from Rome. It will be recollected that Henry's parting words to Balvena at Rouen had been: "Tell the archduke that I am very much his friend. Let him arrange a peace. Begone. Be diligent." [50]

But the king's reply to Calvaert, when, after the interview with Villeroy, that envoy was admitted to the royal dressing-room for private conversation and took the occasion to remonstrate with his Majesty on these intrigues with the Spanish agent, was that he should send off Balvena in such fashion that it would take from the cardinal-archduke all hope of troubling him with any further propositions.[51]

It has been seen, too, with what an outbreak of wrath the proposition, made by Elizabeth through Robert Sydney, that she should succour Calais on condition of keeping it for herself, had been received by Henry. At a somewhat later moment, when Calais had passed entirely into the possession of Spain, the queen offered to lay siege to that city with twelve thousand men, but with the understanding that the success was to be entirely for her own profit. Again the king had expressed great astonishment and indignation at the proposition.[52]

Nevertheless, after Amiens had been lost, Henry had sent Fonquerolles on a special mission to England,[53] asking Elizabeth's assistance in the siege for its recovery, and offering that she should keep Calais as a pledge for expenses thus incurred, on the same terms as those on which she held the Brill and Flushing in the Netherlands. This proposal, however, to make a considerable campaign in Picardy, and to be indemnified by Henry for her trouble with the pledge of a city which was not his property, did not seem tempting to Elizabeth. The mission of Fonquerolles was fruitless, as might have been supposed.[54] Nothing certainly in the queen's attitude, up to that moment, could induce the supposition

[50] *Antea.* [51] Caron to the States, in Deventer, *ubi sup.* [52] Ibid.
[53] Instructions for Fonquerolles, in Prevost Paradol, Elizabeth et Henri IV.
[54] Calvaert to States-General, in Deventer, ii. 47.

that she would help to reduce Amiens for the sake of the privilege of conquering Calais if she could.

So soon as her refusal was made certain, Henry dropped the mask. Buzanval, the regular French envoy at the Hague—even while amazing the States by rebukes for their short-comings in the field and by demands for immediate co-operation in the king's campaign, when the king was doing nothing but besiege Amiens—astonished the republican statesmen still further by telling them that his master was listening seriously to the pope's secret offers.[55]

His Holiness had assured the king, through the legate at Paris, that he could easily bring about a peace between him and Philip, if Henry would agree to make it alone, and he would so manage it that the king's name should not be mixed up with the negotiations, and that he should not appear as seeking for peace. It was to be considered however—so Henry's envoy intimated both at Greenwich and the Hague—that if the king should accept the pope's intervention he would be obliged to exclude from a share in it the queen and all others not of the Catholic religion, and it was feared that the same necessity which had compelled him to listen to these overtures would force him still further in the same path. He dreaded lest, between peace and war, he might fall into a position in which the law would be dictated to him either by the enemy or by those who had undertaken to help him out of danger.

Much more information to this effect did Buzanval communicate to the States on the authority of a private letter from the king, telling him of the ill-success of the mission of Fonquerolles.[56] That diplomatist had brought back nothing from England, it appeared, save excuses, general phrases, and many references to the troubles in Ireland and to the danger of a new Spanish Armada.

It was now for the first time, moreover, that the States learned how they had been duped both by England and

[55] Bor, IV. 324, 325. [56] An abstract of the letter is given by Bor, *ubi sup.*

France in the matter of the League. To their surprise they were informed that while they were themselves furnishing four thousand men, according to the contract signed by the three powers, the queen had in reality only agreed to contribute two thousand soldiers, and these only for four months' service, within a very strict territorial limit, and under promise of immediate reimbursement of the expenses thus incurred.[57]

These facts, together with the avowal that their magnanimous ally had all along been secretly treating for peace with the common enemy, did not make a cheerful impression upon those plain-spoken republicans, nor was it much consolation to them to receive the assurance that "after the king's death his affection and gratitude towards the States would be found deeply engraved upon his heart."[58]

The result of such a future autopsy might seem a matter of comparative indifference, since meantime the present effect to the republic of those deep emotions was a treacherous desertion. Calvaert, too, who had so long haunted the king like his perpetual shadow, and who had believed him—at least so far as the Netherlands were concerned—to be almost without guile,[59] had been destined after all to a rude awakening. Sick and suffering, he did not cease, so long as life was in him, to warn the States-General of the dangers impending over them from the secret negotiations which their royal ally was doing his best to conceal from them, and as to which he had for a time succeeded so dexterously in hoodwinking their envoy himself. But the honest and energetic agent of the republic did not live to see the consummation of these manœuvres of Henry and the pope. He died in Paris during the month of June of this year.[60]

Certainly the efforts of Spanish and Papal diplomacy had

[57] Bor, *ubi sup. Vide antea.*

[58] Bor, *ubi sup.*

[59] "Deurien, S.M." wrote Calvaert in June, 1596, "(Sonder jactantie gesproken) binnen den tyt ick by hem geweest ben, my luttel particulariteiten verborgen heeft, seggende dikmael met expresse woorden, en soo ick geloove sonder fictie (*die in hem cleyn is*) [!] dat hy niet begeerde de kennis syner handelingen desen oorlog raakende, aen U. M. E. te onttrecken." Calvaert to the States-General, Deventer, ii. 118.

[60] Van Deventer, ii. 148.

not been unsuccessful in bringing about a dissolution of the bonds of amity by which the three powers seemed so lately to be drawing themselves very closely together. The republic and Henry IV. were now on a most uncomfortable footing towards each other. On the other hand, the queen was in a very ill humour with the States and very angry with Henry. Especially the persistent manner in which the Hollanders carried on trade with Spain, and were at the same time making fortunes for themselves and feeding the enemy, while Englishmen, on pain of death, were debarred from participation in such traffic, excited great and general indignation in England. In vain was it represented that this trade, if prohibited to the commonwealth, would fall into the hands of neutral powers, and that Spain would derive her supplies from the Baltic and other regions as regularly as ever, while the republic, whose whole life was in her foreign commerce, would not only become incapable of carrying on the war but would perish of inanition. The English statesmen threatened to declare all such trade contraband, and vessels engaging in it lawful prize to English cruisers.[61] June, 1597.

Burghley declared, with much excitement, to Caron, that he, as well as all the council, considered the conduct of the Hollanders so unjustifiable as to make them regret that their princess had ever embarked with a State which chose to aid its own enemies in the destruction of itself and its allies. Such conduct was so monstrous that those who were told of it would hardly believe it.[62]

The Dutch envoy observed that there were thirty thousand sailors engaged in this trade, and he asked the Lord Treasurer whether he proposed that these people should all starve or be driven into the service of the enemy. Burghley rejoined that the Hollanders had the whole world beside to pursue their traffic in, that they did indeed trade over the whole world,

[61] "Ende voor vrybuyt doen verklaren alle sulcke schepen," &c.—Caron to the States-General, 24 Sept. 1597, in Deventer, 157–161.

[62] Caron's despatch, last cited.

and had thereby become so extraordinarily, monstrously rich that there was no believing it.[63]

Caron declared his sincere wish that this was true, but said, on the contrary, that he knew too well what extreme trouble and labour the States-General had in providing for the expenses of the war and in extracting the necessary funds from the various communities. This would hardly be the case were such great wealth in the land as was imagined. But still the English counsellors protested that they would stop this trading with the enemy at every hazard.[64]

On the question of peace or war itself the republican diplomatists were often baffled as to the true intentions of the English Government. "As the queen is fine and false," said Marquis Havré, observing and aiding in the various intrigues which were weaving at Brussels, "and her council much the same, she is practising towards the Hollanders a double stratagem. On the one hand she induces them to incline to a general peace. On the other, her adherents, ten or twelve in number of those who govern Holland and have credit with the people, insist that the true interest of the State is in a continuation of the war."[65]

But Havré, adept in diplomatic chicane as he undoubtedly was, would have found it difficult to find any man of intelligence or influence in that rebellious commonwealth, of which he was once a servant, who had any doubt on that subject. It needed no English argument to persuade Olden-Barneveld, and the other statesmen who guided the destiny of the republic, that peace would be destruction. Moreover, there is no question that both the queen and Burghley would have been truly grateful had the States-General been willing to make peace and return to the allegiance which they had long since spurned.

Nevertheless it is difficult to say whether there were at this moment more of animosity in Elizabeth's mind towards

[63] Caron's despatch, last cited. [64] Ibid.
[65] Deventer, 169, from the Belgian Archives. Havré to Archduke Albert.

her backsliding ally, with whom she had so recently and so pompously sworn an eternal friendship, or towards her ancient enemy. Although she longed for peace, she hardly saw her way to it, for she felt that the secret movements of Henry had in a manner barred the path. She confessed to the States' envoy that it was as easy for her to make black white as to make peace with Spain.[66] To this Caron cordially assented, saying with much energy, "There is as much chance for your Majesty and for us to make peace, during the life of the present King of Spain, as to find redemption in hell."[67]

To the Danish ambassadors, who had come to England with proposals of mediation, the queen had replied that the King of Spain had attacked her dominions many times, and had very often attempted her assassination;[68] that after long patience she had begun to defend herself, and had been willing to show him that she had the courage and the means, not only to maintain herself against his assaults, but also to invade his realms; that, therefore, she was not disposed to speak first, nor to lay down any conditions. Yet, if she saw that the King of Spain had any remorse for his former offences against her, and wished to make atonement for them, she was willing to declare that her heart was not so alienated from peace, but that she could listen to propositions on the subject.[69]

She said, too, that such a peace must be a general one, including both the King of France and the States of the Netherlands, for with these powers she had but lately made an offensive and defensive league against the King of Spain, from which she protested that for no consideration in the world would she ever swerve one jot.

Certainly these were words of Christian charity and good faith, but such professions are the common staple of orations and documents for public consumption. As the accounts

[66] Caron to the States-General, Sept. 1597. Deventer, ii. 153–156.

[67] Ibid. 156.

[68] "Ende seer dickmael naer haer lyfe eynde leven heeft doen staen."—Caron to States-General, 24 Sept. 1597 Deventer, ii. 159.

[69] Ibid.

became more and more minute, however, of Henry's intrigues with Albert, Philip, and Clement, the queen grew more angry.

She told Caron that she was quite aware that the king had long been in communication with the cardinal's emissaries, and that he had even sent some of his principal counsellors to confer with the cardinal himself at Arras, in direct violation of the stipulations of the league. She expressed her amazement at the king's conduct; for she knew very well, she said, that the league had hardly been confirmed and sworn to, before he was treating with secret agents sent to him by the cardinal. "And now," she continued, "they propose to send an ambassador to inform me of the whole proceeding, and to ask my advice and consent in regard to negotiations which they have, perchance, entirely concluded."

16 Nov. 1597.

She further informed the republican envoy that the king had recently been taking the ground in these dealings with the common enemy; that the two kingdoms of France and England must first be provided for; that when the basis between these powers and Spain had been arranged, it would be time to make arrangements for the States, and that it would probably be found advisable to obtain a truce of three or four years between them and Spain, in which interval the government of the provinces might remain on its actual footing. During this armistice the King of Spain was to withdraw all Spanish troops from the Netherlands, in consequence of which measure all distrust would by degrees vanish, and the community, becoming more and more encouraged, would in time recognise the king for their sovereign once more.[70]

This, according to the information received by Elizabeth from her resident minister in France, was Henry's scheme for carrying out the principles of the offensive and defensive league, which only the year before he had so solemnly concluded with the Dutch republic. Instead of assisting that

[70] Caron to States-General, 19 Nov. 1597. Deventer, ii. 161–164.

commonwealth in waging her war of independence against Spain, he would endeavour to make it easy for her to return peacefully to her ancient thraldom.[71]

The queen asked Caron what he thought of the project. How could that diplomatist reply but with polite scorn? Not a year of such an armistice would elapse, he said, before the Spanish partisans would have it all their own way in the Netherlands, and the King of Spain would be master of the whole country. Again and again he repeated that peace, so long as Philip lived, was an impossibility for the States. No doubt that monarch would gladly consent to the proposed truce, for it would be indeed strange if by means of it he could not so establish himself in the provinces as to easily overthrow the sovereigns who were thus helping him to so advantageous a position.[72]

The queen listened patiently to a long and earnest remonstrance in this vein made by the envoy, and assured him that not even to gain another kingdom would she be the cause of a return of the provinces to the dominion of Spain. She would do her best to dissuade the king from his peace negotiations; but she would listen to De Maisse, the new special envoy from Henry, and would then faithfully report to Caron, by word of mouth, the substance of the conversation. The States-General did not deserve to be deceived, nor would she be a party to any deception, unless she were first cheated herself. "I feel indeed," she added, "that matters are not always managed as they should be by your Government, and that you have not always treated princes, especially myself, as we deserve to be treated. Nevertheless, your State is not a monarchy, and so we must take all things into consideration, and weigh its faults against its many perfections."[73]

[71] Caron to States-General, 19 Nov. 1597. Deventer, ii. 161–164.

[72] Ibid.

[73] "Ick bevinde wel (seide sy) dat het niet al recht soo 't behoorde in hunne regeeringe toegaet, en dat sy niet altyts de Princen immers niet my tincteren soo wy wel in hun regart verdient hebben; doch hun staet is oock geen monarchie, en daarom wy moeten alles considereren en de faulten met vele perfectien die sy hebben tegen elkander laeten gemoeten."—Caron's Despatch, last cited.

With this philosophical—and in the mouth of Elizabeth Tudor, surely very liberal—reflection, the queen terminated the interview with the republican envoy.

Meantime the conferences with the special ambassador of France proceeded. For, so soon as Henry had completed all his arrangements, and taken his decision to accept the very profitable peace offered to him by Spain, he assumed that air of frankness which so well became him, and candidly avowed his intention of doing what he had already done. Hurault de Maisse arrived in England not long before the time when the peace-commissioners were about assembling at Vervins. He was instructed to inform her Majesty that he had done his best to bring about a general alliance of the European powers from which alone the league concluded between England, France, and the Netherlands would have derived substantial strength.[74]

But as nothing was to be hoped for from Germany, as England offered but little assistance, and as France was exhausted by her perpetual conflicts, it had become necessary for the king to negotiate for a peace. He now wished to prove, therefore, to the queen, as to a sister to whom he was under such obligations, that the interests of England were as dear to him as those of France.

The proof of these generous sentiments did not, however, seem so clear as could be wished, and there were very stormy debates, so soon as the ambassador found himself in conference with her Majesty's counsellors. The English statesmen bitterly reproached the French for having thus lightly thrown away the alliance between the two countries, and they insisted upon the duty of the king to fulfil his solemn engagements.

The reply was very frank and very decided. Kings, said De Maisse, never make treaties except with the tacit condition to embrace every thing that may be useful to them, and carefully to avoid every thing prejudicial to their interests.[75]

[74] De Thou, xiii. 206, *seqq.*, l. 120.

[75] Ibid.

The corollary from this convenient and sweeping maxim was simple enough. The king could not be expected by his allies to reject an offered peace which was very profitable, nor to continue a war which was very detrimental. All that they could expect was that he should communicate his intentions to them, and this he was now very cheerfully doing. Such in brief were the statements of De Maisse.[76]

The English were indignant. They also said a stout word for the provinces, although it has been made sufficiently clear that they did not love that upstart republic. But the French ambassador replied that his master really meant secretly to assist the States in carrying on the war until they should make an arrangement.[77] He should send them very powerful succours for this purpose, and he expected confidently that England would assist him in this line of conduct.[78] Thus Henry was secretly pledging himself to make underhand but substantial war against Spain, with which power he was at that instant concluding peace, while at the same time he was abandoning his warlike league with the queen and the republic, in order to affect that very pacification. Truly the morality of the governing powers of the earth was not entirely according to the apostolic standard.

The interviews between the queen and the new ambassador were, of course, on his part, more courteous in tone than those with the counsellors, but mainly to the same effect. De Maisse stated that the Spanish king had offered to restore every place that he held in France, including Calais, Brittany, and the Marquisate of Saluces, and as he likewise manifested a willingness to come to favourable terms with her Majesty and with the States, it was obviously the duty of Henry to make these matters known to her Majesty, in whose hands was thus placed the decision between peace or continuation

[76] De Thou, xiii. 206, *seqq*, l. 120.

[77] Ibid.

[78] "Qu'en faisant la paix avec les Espagnols il ne laisseroit pas de fournir secretement aux Etats-Généraux de puissans secours jusqu'à ce que leur accommodement fût fait, et qu'il souhaitoit se joindre avec l'Angleterre pour les aider et les soutenir, soit en paix, soit en guerre."—De Thou, *ubi sup.*

of the war.[79] The queen asked what was the authority for the supposition that England was to be included by Spain in the pacification. De Maisse quoted President Richardot. In that case, the queen remarked, it was time for her to prepare for a third Spanish armada. When a former envoy from France had alluded to Richardot as expressing the same friendly sentiments on the part of his sovereign and himself, she had replied by referring to the sham negotiations of Bourbourg, by which the famous invasion of 1588 had been veiled, and she had intimated her expectation that another Spanish fleet would soon be at her throat. And within three weeks of the utterance of her prophecy the second armada, under Santa Gadea, had issued from Spain to assail her realms. Now then, as Richardot was again cited as a peace negotiator, it was time to look for a third invasion. It was an impertinence for Secretary of State Villeroy to send her word about Richardot. It was not an impertinence in King Henry, who understood war-matters better than he did affairs of state, in which kings were generally governed by their counsellors and secretaries, but it was very strange that Villeroy should be made quiet with a simple declaration of Richardot.[80]

The queen protested that she would never consent to a peace with Spain, except with the knowledge and consent of the States. De Maisse replied that the king was of the same mind, upon which her Majesty remarked that in that case he had better have apprised her and the States of his intentions before treating alone and secretly with the enemy. The envoy denied that the king had been treating. He had only been listening to what the King of Spain had to propose, and suggesting his own wishes and intentions. The queen rejoined that this was treating if anything was, and certainly her Majesty was in the right if the term has any meaning at all.

Elizabeth further reproachfully observed, that although

[79] Caron to the States-General, 10 December, 1597 (O. S.), in Deventer, ii. 165–168.

[80] Ibid.

the king talked about continuing the war, he seemed really tired of that dangerous pursuit, in which he had exercised himself so many long years, and that he was probably beginning to find a quiet and agreeable life more to his taste. She expressed the hope, however, that he would acquit himself honourably towards herself and her allies, and keep the oaths which he had so solemnly sworn before God.

Such was the substance of the queen's conversations with De Maisse, as she herself subsequently reported them to the States' envoy.[81]

The republican statesmen had certainly cause enough to suspect Henry's intentions, but they did not implicitly trust Elizabeth. They feared that both king and queen were heartily sick of the war, and disposed to abandon the league, while each was bent on securing better terms than the other in any negotiations for peace. Barneveld—on the whole the most sagacious of the men then guiding the affairs of Europe, although he could dispose of but comparatively slender resources, and was merely the chief minister of a scarcely born little commonwealth of some three million souls—was doing his best to save the league and to divert Henry from thoughts of peace. Feeling that the queen, notwithstanding her professions to Caron and others, would have gladly entered into negotiations with Philip, had she found the door as wide open as Henry had found it, he did his best to prevent both his allies from proceeding farther in that direction. He promised the French envoy at the Hague that not only would the republic continue to furnish the four thousand soldiers as stipulated in the league, but that if Henry would recommence active operations, a States' army of nine thousand foot and two thousand horse should at once take the field on the Flemish frontier of France, and aid in the campaign to the full extent of their resources.[82] If the king were disposed to undertake the siege of Calais, the Advocate engaged that he should be likewise energetically assisted in that enterprise.[83]

[81] Caron's Despatch, last cited.
[82] Letters of Buzanval, cited by Deventer, ii. 164, 165.
[83] Ibid.

Nor was it suggested in case the important maritime stronghold were recovered that it should be transferred, not to the sovereign of France, but to the dominions of the republic. That was the queen's method of assisting an ally, but it was not the practice of the States. Buzanval, who was quite aware of his master's decision to conclude peace, suggested Henry's notion of a preliminary and general truce for six months. But of course Barneveld rejected the idea with horror. He felt, as every intelligent statesman of the commonwealth could not but feel, that an armistice would be a death-blow. It would be better, he said, for the States to lose one or two towns than to make a truce, for there were so many people in the commonwealth sure to be dazzled by the false show of a pacification, that they would be likely, after getting into the suburbs, to wish to enter the heart of the city. "If," said the Advocate, "the French and the English know what they are doing when they are facilitating the Spanish dominion in the provinces, they would prefer to lose a third of their own kingdoms to seeing the Spaniard absolute master here."[84]

It was determined, in this grave position of affairs, to send a special mission both to France and to England with the Advocate as its chief. Henry made no objections to this step, but, on the contrary, affected much impatience for the arrival of the envoys, and ascribed the delay to the intrigues of Elizabeth. He sent word to Prince Maurice and to Barneveld that he suspected the queen of endeavouring to get before him in negotiating with Spain in order to obtain Calais for herself.[85] And, in truth, Elizabeth very soon afterwards informed Barneveld that she might really have had Calais, and have got the better of the king in these secret transactions.[86]

Meantime, while the special mission to France and England was getting ready to depart, an amateur diplomatist appeared in Brussels, and made a feeble

1598.

[84] Letters of Buzanval, cited by Deventer, ii. 164, 165.
[85] Verhaal van Olden-Barneveld, in Deventer, ii. 171. [86] Ibid.

effort to effect a reconciliation between the republic and the cardinal.

This was a certain Van der Meulen, an Antwerp merchant, who, for religious reasons, had emigrated to Leyden, and who was now invited by the cardinal archduke to Brussels to confer with his counsellors as to the possibility of the rebellious States accepting his authority.[87] For, as will soon be indicated, Philip had recently resolved on a most important step. He was about to transfer the sovereignty of all the Netherlands to his daughter Isabella and her destined husband, Cardinal Albert. It would, obviously, therefore, be an excessively advantageous arrangement for those new sovereigns if the rebellious States would join hands with the obedient provinces, accept the dominion of Albert and Isabella, and give up their attempt to establish a republican government. Accordingly the cardinal had intimated that the States would be allowed the practice of their religion, while the military and civil functionaries might retain office. He even suggested that he would appoint Maurice of Nassau his stadholder for the northern provinces, unless he should prefer a high position in the Imperial armies.[88] Such was the general admiration felt in Spain and elsewhere for the military talents of the prince, that he would probably be appointed commander-in-chief of the forces against Mahomet.[89] Van der Meulen duly reported all these ingenious schemes to the States, but the sturdy republicans only laughed at them. They saw clearly enough through such slight attempts to sow discord in their commonwealth, and to send their great chieftain to Turkey.

A most affectionate letter, written by the cardinal-archduke to the States-General, inviting them to accept his sovereignty, and another from the obedient provinces to the united States of the same purport, remained unanswered.[90]

But the Antwerp merchant, in his interviews with the crafty politicians who surrounded the cardinal, was able at least to obtain some insight into the opinions prevalent at

[87] Bor, IV. 468. [88] Ibid. [89] Ibid. [90] Ibid.

Brussels ; and these were undoubtedly to the effect that both England and France were willing enough to abandon the cause of the Netherlands, provided only that they could obtain satisfactory arrangements for themselves.

Van der Meulen remarked to Richardot that in all their talk about a general peace nothing had been said of the Queen of England, to whom the States were under so great obligations, and without whom they would never enter into any negotiations.

Richardot replied that the queen had very sagaciously provided for the safety of her own kingdom, and had kept up the fire everywhere else in order to shelter herself. There was more difficulty for this lady, he said, than for any of the rest. She had shown herself very obstinate, and had done them a great deal of mischief. They knew very well that the King of France did not love her. Nevertheless, as they had resolved upon a general peace, they were willing to treat with her as well as with the others.[91]

[91] Verhaal van Van der Meulen, cited by Deventer, ii. 178.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Mission of the States to Henry to prevent the consummation of peace with Spain — Proposal of Henry to elevate Prince Maurice to the sovereignty of the States — Embarkation of the States' envoys for England — Their interview with Queen Elizabeth — Return of the envoys from England — Demand of Elizabeth for repayment of her advances to the republic — Second embassy to England — Final arrangement between the Queen and the States.

THE great Advocate was now to start on his journey in order to make a supreme effort both with Henry and with Elizabeth to prevent the consummation of this fatal peace. Admiral Justinus of Nassau, natural son of William the Silent, was associated with Barneveld in the mission, a brave fighting man, a staunch patriot, and a sagacious counsellor; but the Advocate on this occasion, as in other vital emergencies of the commonwealth, was all in all.

The instructions of the envoys were simple. They were to summon the king to fulfil his solemnly sworn covenants with the league. The States-General had never doubted, they said, that so soon as the enemy had begun to feel the effects of that league he would endeavour to make a composition with one or other of the parties in order to separate them, and to break up that united strength which otherwise he could never resist. The king was accordingly called upon to continue the war against the common enemy, and the States-General offered, over and above the four hundred and fifty thousand florins promised by them for the support of the four thousand infantry for the year 1598, to bring their whole military power, horse and foot, into the field to sustain his Majesty in the war, whether separately or in conjunction, whether in the siege of cities or in open campaigns.[1] Certainly they could hardly offer fairer terms than these.

[1] Instructions, &c., in Deventer, ii. 177–181.

Henry had complained, and not unreasonably, that Elizabeth had made no offers of assistance for carrying on the war either to Fonquerolles or to Hurault de Maisse ; but he certainly could make no reproach of that nature against the republic, nor assign their lukewarmness as an excuse for his desertion.

The envoys were ready to take their departure for France on the last day of January.

It might be a curious subject to consider how far historical events are modified and the world's destiny affected by the different material agencies which man at various epochs has had at his disposal. The human creature in his passions and ambitions, his sensual or sordid desires, his emotional and moral nature, undergoes less change than might be hoped from age to age. The tyrant, the patriot, the demagogue, the voluptuary, the peasant, the trader, the intriguing politician, the hair-splitting diplomatist, the self-sacrificing martyr, the self-seeking courtier, present essentially one type in the twelfth, the sixteenth, the nineteenth, or any other century. The human tragi-comedy seems ever to repeat itself with the same bustle, with the same excitement for immediate interests, for the development of the instant plot or passing episode, as if the universe began and ended with each generation—as in reality it would appear to do for the great multitude of the actors. There seems but a change of masks, of costume, of phraseology, combined with a noisy but eternal monotony. Yet while men are produced and are whirled away again in endless succession, Man remains, and to all appearance is perpetual and immortal even on this earth. Whatever science acquires man inherits. Whatever steadfastness is gained for great moral truths which change not through the ages—however they may be thought, in dark or falsely brilliant epochs, to resolve themselves into elemental vapour—gives man a securer foothold in his onward and upward progress. The great, continuous history of that progress is not made up of the reigns of kings or the lives of politicians, with whose names history has often found it con-

venient to mark its epochs. These are but milestones on the turnpike. Human progress is over a vast field, and it is only at considerable intervals that a retrospective view enables us to discern whether the movement has been slow or rapid, onward or retrograde.

The record of our race is essentially unwritten. What we call history is but made up of a few scattered fragments, while it is scarcely given to human intelligence to comprehend the great whole. Yet it is strange to reflect upon the leisurely manner in which great affairs were conducted in the period with which we are now occupied, as compared with the fever and whirl of our own times, in which the stupendous powers of steam and electricity are ever ready to serve the most sublime or the most vulgar purposes of mankind. Whether there were ever a critical moment in which a rapid change might have been effected in royal or national councils, had telegraphic wires and express trains been at the command of Henry, or Burghley, or Barneveld, or the Cardinal Albert, need not and cannot be decided. It is almost diverting, however, to see how closely the intrigues of cabinets, the movements of armies, the plans of patriots, were once dependent on those natural elements over which man has now gained almost despotic control.

Here was the republic intensely eager to prevent, with all speed, the consummation of a treaty between its ally and its enemy—a step which it was feared might be fatal to its national existence, and concerning which there seemed a momentary hesitation. Yet Barneveld and Justinus of Nassau, although ready on the last day of January, were not able to sail from the Brill to Dieppe until the 18th March, on account of a persistent south-west wind.

After forty-six days of waiting, the envoys, accompanied by Buzanval, Henry's resident at the Hague, were at last, on the 18th March, enabled to set sail with a favourable breeze. As it was necessary for travellers in that day to provide themselves with every possible material for their journey—carriages, horses, hosts of servants, and

18 March, 1598.

beds, fortunate enough if they found roads and occasionally food—Barneveld and Nassau were furnished with three ships of war, while another legation on its way to England had embarked in two other vessels of the same class. A fleet of forty or fifty merchantmen sailed under their convoy. Departing from the Brill in this imposing manner, they sailed by Calais, varying the monotony of the voyage by a trifling sea-fight with some cruisers from that Spanish port, neither side receiving any damage.[2]

Landing at Dieppe on the morning of the 20th, the envoys were received with much ceremony at the city gates by the governor of the place, who conducted them in a stately manner to a house called the king's mansion, which he politely placed at their disposal. "As we learned, however," says Barneveld, with grave simplicity, "that there was no furniture whatever in that royal abode, we thanked his Excellency, and declared that we would rather go to a tavern."

After three days of repose and preparation in Dieppe they started at dawn on their journey to Rouen, where they arrived at sundown.

23 March, 1598.

On the next morning but one they set off again on their travels, and slept that night at Louviers. Another long day's journey brought them to Evreux. On the 27th they came to Dreux, on the 28th to Chartres, and on the 29th to Chateaudun. On the 30th, having started an hour before sunrise, they were enabled after a toilsome journey to reach Blois at an hour after dark. Exhausted with fatigue, they reposed in that city for a day, and on the 1st April proceeded, partly by the river Loire and partly by

25 March.

[2] The journey and the whole progress of the negotiations have been minutely described by Olden-Barneveld, in his Report to the States-General, made 5 June, 1598.

"Verhaal van ons Justinus ende Johan van Olden-Barnevelt van het besoigne gevallen in onse Legatie aan de Con. Mat. van Vranckryck gedaen in den jaere 1598 (Minuut van Olden-Barnevelt)."

Of this very important MS., long unpublished, I possess a copy, taken from the original in the royal Archives of the Hague. Subsequently, however, it has been printed, for the first time, I believe, by Deventer, in his valuable collection, No. cxvi. vol. ii. pp. 176–245.

the road, as far as Tours. Here they were visited by nobody, said Barneveld, but fiddlers and drummers, and were execrably lodged. Nevertheless they thought the town in other respects agreeable, and apparently beginning to struggle out of the general desolation of France. On the 2nd April they slept at Langeais, and on the night of the 3rd reached Saumur, where they were disappointed at the absence of the illustrious Duplessis Mornay, then governor of that city. A glance at any map of France will show the course of the journey taken by the travellers, which, after very hard work and great fatigue, had thus brought them from Dieppe to Saumur in about as much time as is now consumed by an average voyage from Europe to America. In their whole journey from Holland to Saumur, inclusive of the waiting upon the wind and other enforced delays, more than two months had been consumed. Twenty-four hours would suffice at present for the excursion.

At Saumur they received letters informing them that the king was "expecting them with great devotion at Angiers." A despatch from Cecil, who was already with Henry, also apprised them that he found "matters entirely arranged for a peace." This would be very easily accomplished, he said, for France and England, but the great difficulty was for the Netherlands. He had come to France principally for the sake of managing affairs for the advantage of the States, but he begged the envoys not to demean themselves as if entirely bent on war.[3]

They arrived at Angiers next day before dark, and were met at a league's distance from the gates by the governor of the castle, attended by young Prince Frederic Henry of Nassau, followed by a long train of nobles and mounted troops. Welcomed in this stately manner on behalf of the king, the envoys were escorted to the lodgings provided for them in the city. The same evening they waited on the widowed princess of Orange, Louisa of Coligny, then residing temporarily with her son in Angiers, and were

4 April.

[3] Verhaal, &c.

informed by her that the king's mind was irrevocably fixed on peace. She communicated, however, the advice of her step-son in law, the Duke of Bouillon, that they should openly express their determination to continue the war, notwithstanding that both their Majesties of England and France wished to negotiate. Thus the counsels of Bouillon to the envoys were distinctly opposed to those of Cecil, and it was well known to them that the duke was himself sincerely anxious that the king should refuse the pacific offers of Spain.

Next morning, 5th April, they were received at the gates of the castle by the governor of Anjou and the commandant of the citadel of Angiers, attended by a splendid retinue, and were conducted to the king, who was walking in the garden of the fortress. Henry received them with great demonstrations of respect, assuring them that he considered the States-General the best and most faithful friends that he possessed in the world, and that he had always been assisted by them in time of his utmost need with resoluteness and affection.

The approach of the English ambassador, accompanied by the Chancellor of France and several other persons, soon brought the interview to a termination. Barneveld then presented several gentlemen attached to the mission, especially his son and Hugo Grotius, then a lad of fifteen, but who had already gained such distinction at Leyden that Scaliger, Pontanus, Heinsius, Dousa, and other professors, foretold that he would become more famous than Erasmus. They were all very cordially received by the king, who subsequently bestowed especial marks of his consideration upon the youthful Grotius.

The same day the betrothal of Monsieur Cæsar with the daughter of the Duke of Mercœur was celebrated, and there was afterwards much dancing and banqueting at the castle. It was obvious enough to the envoys that the matter of peace and war was decided. The general of the Franciscans, sent by the pope, had been flitting very busily for many months between Rome, Madrid, Brussels, and Paris, and there could

be little doubt that every detail of the negotiations between France and Spain had been arranged while Olden-Barneveld and his colleague had been waiting for the head-wind to blow itself out at the Brill.

Nevertheless no treaty had as yet been signed, and it was the business of the republican diplomatists to prevent the signature if possible. They felt, however, that they were endeavouring to cause water to run up hill. Villeroy, De Maisse, and Buzanval came to them to recount, by the king's order, everything that had taken place. This favour was, however, the less highly appreciated by them, as they felt that the whole world was in a very short time to be taken as well into the royal confidence. 7 April.

These French politicians stated that the king, after receiving the most liberal offers of peace on the part of Spain, had communicated all the facts to the queen, and had proposed, notwithstanding these most profitable overtures, to continue the war as long as her Majesty and the States-General would assist him in it. De Maisse had been informed, however, by the queen that she had no means to assist the king withal, and was, on the contrary, very well disposed to make peace.[4] The lord treasurer had avowed the same opinions as his sovereign, had declared himself to be a man of peace, and had exclaimed that peace once made he would sing "Nunc dimitte servum tuum Domine."[5] Thereupon, at the suggestion of the legate, negotiations had begun at Vervins, and although nothing was absolutely concluded, yet Sir Robert Cecil, having just been sent as special ambassador from the queen, had brought no propositions whatever of assistance in carrying on the war, but plenty of excuses about armadas, Irish rebellions, and the want of funds. There was nothing in all this, they said, but want of good will. The queen had done nothing and would do nothing for the league herself, nor would she solicit for it the adherence of other kings and princes. The king, by making peace, could restore his kingdom to prosperity, relieve the distress of his subjects, and get back all his

[4] Verhaal, &c., 199. [5] Ibid.

lost cities—Calais, Ardres, Dourlens, Blavet, and many more —without any expense of treasure or of blood.

Certainly there was cogency in this reasoning from the point of view of the French king, but it would have been as well to state, when he was so pompously making a league for offensive and defensive war, that his real interests and his real purposes were peace. Much excellent diplomacy, much ringing of bells, firing of artillery, and singing of anthems in royal chapels, and much disappointment to honest Dutchmen, might have thus been saved. It is also instructive to observe the difference between the accounts of De Maisse's negotiations in England given by that diplomatist himself, and those rendered by the queen to the States' envoy.

Of course the objurgations of the Hollanders that the king, in a very fallacious hope of temporary gain to himself, was about to break his solemn promises to his allies and leave them to their fate, drew but few tears down the iron cheeks of such practised diplomatists as Villeroy and his friends.

The envoys visited De Rosny, who assured them that he was very much their friend, but gave them to understand that there was not the slightest possibility of inducing the king to break off the negotiations.

Before taking final leave of his Majesty they concluded, by advice of the Princess of Orange and of Buzanval, to make the presents which they had brought with them from the States-General. Accordingly they sent, through the hands of the princess, four pieces of damask linen and two pieces of fine linen to the king's sister, Madame Catherine, two pieces of linen to Villeroy, and two to the beautiful Gabrielle. The two remaining pieces were bestowed upon Buzanval for his pains in accompanying them on the journey and on their arrival at court.[7]

The incident shows the high esteem in which the Netherland fabrics were held at that period.

There was a solemn conference at last between the leading counsellors of the king, the chancellor, the Dukes of Es-

[7] Verhaal, &c., 201.

pernon and Bouillon, Count Schomberg, and De Sancy, Plessis, Buzanval, Maisse, the Dutch envoys, and the English ambassador and commissioner Herbert. Cecil presided, and Barneveld once more went over the whole ground, resuming with his usual vigour all the arguments by which the king's interest and honour were proved to require him to desist from the peace negotiations. And the orator had as much success as is usual with those who argue against a foregone conclusion. Everyone had made up his mind. Everyone knew that peace was made. It is unnecessary, therefore, to repeat the familiar train of reasoning. It is superfluous to say that the conference was barren. On the same evening Villeroy called on the States' envoys, and informed them plainly, on the part of the king, that his Majesty had fully made up his mind.

On the 23rd April—three mortal weeks having thus been wasted in diplomatic trifling—Barneveld was admitted to his Majesty's dressing-room. The Advocate at the king's request came without his colleague, and was attended only by his son. No other persons were present in the chamber, save Buzanval and Beringen. The king on this occasion confirmed what had so recently been stated by Villeroy. He had thoroughly pondered, he said, all the arguments used by the States to dissuade him from the negotiation, and had found them of much weight. The necessities of his kingdom, however, compelled him to accept a period of repose. He would not, however, in the slightest degree urge the States to join in the treaty. He desired their security, and would aid in maintaining it. What had most vexed him was that the Protestants with great injustice accused him of intending to make war upon them. But innumerable and amazing reports were flying abroad, both among his own subjects, the English, and the enemies' spies, as to these secret conferences. He then said that he would tell the Duke of Bouillon to speak with Sir Robert Cecil concerning a subject which now for the first time he would mention privately to Olden-Barneveld.

The king then made a remarkable and unexpected sug-

gestion. Alluding to the constitution of the Netherlands, he remarked that a popular government in such emergencies as those then existing was subject to more danger than monarchies were, and he asked the Advocate if he thought there was no disposition to elect a prince.[8]

Barneveld replied that the general inclination was rather for a good republic. The government, however, he said, was not of the people, but aristocratic, and the state was administered according to laws and charters by the principal inhabitants, whether nobles or magistrates of cities. Since the death of the late Prince of Orange, and the offer made to the King of France, and subsequently to the Queen of England, of the sovereignty, there had been no more talk on that subject, and to discuss again so delicate a matter might cause divisions and other difficulties in the State.[9]

Henry then spoke of Prince Maurice, and asked whether, if he should be supported by the Queen of England and the King of France, it would not be possible to confer the sovereignty upon him.

Here certainly was an astounding question to be discharged like a pistol-shot full in the face of a republican minister.

The answer of the Advocate was sufficiently adroit if not excessively sincere.

If your Majesty, said he, together with her Majesty the queen, think the plan expedient, and are both willing on this footing to continue the war, to rescue all the Netherlands from the hands of the Spaniards and their adherents, and thus render the States eternally obliged to the sovereigns and kingdoms of France and England, my lords the States-General would probably be willing to accept this advice.[10]

But the king replied by repeating that repose was indispensable to him.[11]

Without inquiring for the present whether the project of elevating Maurice to the sovereignty of the Netherlands, at the expense of the republican constitution, was in harmony

[8] Verhaal, &c., 218, and Toespraak van Olden-Barnevelt tot Elizabeth. Deventer, ii. 246. [9] Toespraak, &c. Deventer, ii. 246. [10] Ibid. [11] Ibid.

or not with the private opinions of Barneveld at that period, it must be admitted that the condition he thus suggested was a very safe one to offer. He had thoroughly satisfied himself during the period in which he had been baffled by the south-west gales at the Brill and by the still more persistent head-winds which he had found prevailing at the French court, that it was hopeless to strive for that much-desired haven, a general war. The admiral and himself might as well have endeavoured to persuade Mahomet III. and Sigismund of Poland to join the States in a campaign against Cardinal Albert, as to hope for the same good offices from Elizabeth and Henry.

Having received exactly the answer which he expected, he secretly communicated, next day, to Cecil the proposition thus made by the king. Subsequently he narrated the whole conversation to the Queen of England.

On the 27th April both Barneveld and Nassau were admitted to the royal dressing-room in Nantes citadel for a final audience. Here, after the usual common-places concerning his affection for the Netherlands, and the bitter necessity which compelled him to desert the alliance, Henry again referred to his suggestion in regard to Prince Maurice; urging a change from a republican to a monarchical form of government as the best means of preserving the State. 27 April.

The envoys thanked the king for all the honours conferred upon them, but declared themselves grieved to the heart by his refusal to grant their request. The course pursued by his Majesty, they said, would be found very hard of digestion by the States, both in regard to the whole force of the enemy which would now come upon their throats, and because of the bad example thus set for other powers.

They then took leave, with the usual exchange of compliments. At their departure his Majesty personally conducted them through various apartments until they came to the chamber of his mistress, the Duchess of Beaufort, then lying in childbed. Here he drew wide open the bed-curtains, and

bade them kiss the lady. They complied, and begging the duchess to use her influence in their behalf, respectfully bade her farewell. She promised not to forget their request, and thanked them for the presents of damask and fine linen.

Such was the result of the mission of the great Advocate and his colleague to Henry IV., from which so much had been hoped; and for anything useful accomplished, after such an expenditure of time, money, and eloquence, the whole transaction might have begun and ended in this touching interview with the beautiful Gabrielle.

On the 19th of May the envoys embarked at Dieppe for England, and on the 25th were safely lodged with the resident minister of the republic, Noel de Caron, at the village of Clapham.[12]

25 May.

Having so ill-succeeded in their attempts to prevent the treaty between France and Spain, they were now engaged in what seemed also a forlorn hope, the preservation of their offensive and defensive alliance with England. They were well aware that many of the leading counsellors of Elizabeth, especially Burghley and Buckhurst, were determined upon peace. They knew that the queen was also heartily weary of the war and of the pugnacious little commonwealth which had caused her so much expense. But they knew, too, that Henry, having now secured the repose of his own kingdom, was anything but desirous that his deserted allies should enjoy the same advantage. The king did not cease to assure the States that he would secretly give them assistance in their warfare against his new ally, while Secretary of State Villeroy, as they knew, would place every possible impediment in the way of the queen's negotiations with Spain.[13]

Elizabeth, on her part, was vexed with everybody. What the States most feared was that she might, in her anger or her avarice, make use of the cautionary towns in her negotiations with Philip. At any rate, said Francis Aerssens,

[12] Verhaal, &c., 233.

[13] Aerssens to Olden-Barneveld, 29 May, 1598, in Deventer, 248–250.

then States' minister in France, she will bring us to the brink of the precipice, that we may then throw ourselves into her arms in despair.[14]

The queen was in truth resolved to conclude a peace if a peace could be made. If not, she was determined to make as good a bargain with the States as possible, in regard to the long outstanding account of her advances. Certainly it was not unreasonable that she should wish to see her exchequer reimbursed by people who, as she believed, were rolling in wealth, the fruit of a contraband commerce which she denied to her own subjects, and who were in honour bound to pay their debts to her now, if they wished her aid to be continued. Her subjects were impoverished and panting for peace, and although, as she remarked, "their sense of duty restrained them from the slightest disobedience to her absolute commands," still she could not forgive herself for thus exposing them to perpetual danger.[15]

She preferred on the whole, however, that the commonwealth should consent to its own dissolution; for she thought it unreasonable that—after this war of thirty years, during fifteen of which she had herself actively assisted them—these republican Calvinists should refuse to return to the dominion of their old tyrant and the pope. To Barneveld, Maurice of Nassau, and the States-General this did not seem a very logical termination to so much hard fighting.

Accordingly, when on the 26th of May the two envoys fell on their knees—as the custom was—before the great queen, and had been raised by her to their feet again, they found her Majesty in marvellously ill-humour. Olden-Barneveld recounted to her the results of their mission to France, and said that from beginning to end it had been obvious that there could be no other issue. The king was indifferent, he had said, whether the States preferred

26 May, 1598.

[14] Aerssens to Olden-Barneveld, 29 May, 1598, in Deventer, 248–250.

[15] "Et nonobstant que Sa Ma^{t}. le peust dire avecq un singulier contentement que leur debvoir les retient de la moindre desobeissance contre ses absolutes commandements," &c. &c.—Proposition by Vere and Gilpin to the States-General, 25 June, 1598, in Deventer, ii. 259, *seqq.*

peace or war, but in making his treaty he knew that he had secured a profit for himself, inflicted damage on his enemy, and done no harm to his friends.[16]

Her Majesty then interrupted the speaker by violent invectives against the French king for his treachery. She had written with her own hand, she said, to tell him that she never had believed him capable of doing what secretaries and other servants had reported concerning him, but which had now proved true.

Then she became very abusive to the Dutch envoys, telling them that they were quite unjustifiable in not following Sir Robert Cecil's advice, and in not engaging with him at once in peace negotiations ; at least so far as to discover what the enemy's intentions might be. She added, pettishly, that if Prince Maurice and other functionaries were left in the enjoyment of their offices, and if the Spaniards were sent out of the country, there seemed no reason why such terms should not be accepted.

Barneveld replied that such accommodation was of course impossible, unless they accepted their ancient sovereign as prince. Then came the eternal two points—obedience to God, which meant submission to the pope, and obedience to the king, that was to say, subjection to his despotic authority. Thus the Christian religion would be ruined throughout the provinces, and the whole land be made a bridge and a ladder for Spanish ambition.

The queen here broke forth into mighty oaths, interrupting the envoy's discourse, protesting over and over again by the living God that she would not and could not give the States any further assistance ; that she would leave them to their fate ; that her aid rendered in their war had lasted much longer than the siege of Troy did, and swearing that she had been a fool to help them and the king of France as she had done, for it was nothing but evil passions that kept the States so obstinate.[17]

[16] Verhaal, &c., before cited, 234.

[17] "Haere Mat. interrompeerde ons mit exclamatie ende protestatie repeterende dickwils, par le Dieu vivant.

The envoy endeavoured to soothe her, urging that as she had gained the reputation over the whole world of administering her affairs with admirable, yea with almost divine wisdom, she should now make use of that sagacity in the present very difficult matter. She ought to believe that it was not evil passion, nor ambition, nor obstinacy that prevented the States from joining in these negotiations, but the determination to maintain their national existence, the Christian religion, and their ancient liberties and laws. They did not pretend, he said, to be wiser than great monarchs or their counsellors, but the difference between their form of government and a monarchy must be their excuse.

Monarchs, when they made treaties, remained masters, and could protect their realms and their subjects from danger. The States-General could not accept a prince without placing themselves under his absolute authority, and the Netherlanders would never subject themselves to their deadly enemy, whom they had long ago solemnly renounced.[18]

Surely these remarks of the Advocate should have seemed entirely unanswerable. Surely there was no politician in Europe so ignorant as not to know that any treaty of peace between Philip and the States meant their unconditional subjugation and the complete abolition of the Protestant religion. Least of all did the Queen of England require information on this great matter of state. It was cruel trifling therefore, it was inhuman insolence on her part, to suggest anything like a return of the States to the dominion of Spain.

But her desire for peace and her determination to get back her money overpowered at that time all other considerations.

The States wished to govern themselves, she said; why then could they not make arrangements against all dangers, and why could they not lay down conditions under which the

dat sy niet en wilde nochte en konde den Staten vorder assisteren, dat sy henselven wilden verlaten, dat sy langer haer assistentie hadde gedean als het oorloge van Troien hadde geduurt, seggende dat sysot was geweest doende sulcke assistentie aen ons ende den Coninck van Vranckryck dat het niet den passien en waeren die de Staten dus obstinaet hielden."—Verhaal, &c., 236.

[18] Ibid. 237.

king would not really be their master; especially if France and England should guarantee them against any infraction of their rights. By the living God! by the living God! by the living God! she swore over and over again as her anger rose, she would never more have anything to do with such people; and she deeply regretted having thrown away her money and the lives of her subjects in so stupid a manner.[19]

Again the grave and experienced envoy of the republic strove with calm and earnest words to stay the torrent of her wrath; representing that her money and her pains had by no means been wasted, that the enemy had been brought to shame and his finances to confusion; and urging her, without paying any heed to the course pursued by the King of France, to allow the republic to make levies of troops, at its own expense, within her kingdom.

But her Majesty was obdurate. "How am I to defend myself?" she cried; "how are the affairs of Ireland to be provided for? how am I ever to get back my money? who is to pay the garrisons of Brill and Flushing?" And with this she left the apartment, saying that her counsellors would confer with the envoys.[20]

From the beginning to the end of the interview the queen was in a very evil temper, and took no pains to conceal her dissatisfaction with all the world.

Now there is no doubt whatever that the subsidies furnished by England to the common cause were very considerable, amounting in fourteen years, according to the queen's calculation, to nearly fourteen hundred thousand pounds sterling. But in her interviews with the republican statesmen she was too prone to forget that it *was* a common cause, to forget that the man who had over and over again attempted her assassination, who had repeatedly attempted the invasion of her realms with the whole strength of the most powerful military organization in the world, whose dearest wish on earth was still to accomplish her dethronement and murder, to extirpate from England the religion

[19] Verhaal, &c., 237. [20] Ibid.

professed by the majority of living Englishmen, and to place upon her vacant throne a Spanish, German, or Italian prince, was as much her enemy as he was the foe of his ancient subjects in the Netherlands. At that very epoch Philip was occupied in reminding the pope that the two had always agreed as to the justice of the claims of the Infanta Isabella to the English crown, and calling on his Holiness to sustain those pretensions, now that she had been obliged, in consequence of the treaty with the Prince of Béarne, to renounce her right to reign over France.[21]

Certainly it was fair enough for the queen and her counsellors to stand out for an equitable arrangement of the debt; but there was much to dispute in the figures. When was ever an account of fifteen years' standing adjusted, whether between nations or individuals, without much wrangling? Meantime her Majesty held excellent security in two thriving and most important Netherland cities. But had the States consented to re-establish the Spanish authority over the whole of their little Protestant republic, was there an English child so ignorant of arithmetic or of history as not to see how vast would be the peril, and how incalculable the expense, thus caused to England?

Yet besides the Cecils and the lord high admiral, other less influential counsellors of the crown—even the upright and accomplished Buckhurst, who had so often proved his friendship for the States—were in favour of negotiation. There were many conferences with meagre results. The Englishmen urged that the time had come for the States to repay the queen's advances, to relieve her from future subsidies, to assume the payment of the garrisons in the cautionary

[21] "Y aqui sera bien que acordeis a Su Sant^{d}. asimismo lo que mas de una vez os ha dicho de quanto deseaba encaminar la sucesion de la Infanta mi hija a Ynglaterra quedando reyno por si y allanando para ello los impedimentos de Francia y aun procurando su ayuda en consideracion de remitir les desta parte los grandes derechos de la Infanta y tambien los mios a la recompensa de los excesivos gastos hechos en su beneficio y vereis si por aqui podreis inclinar al papa a que trata de desunir a franceses de ingleses, acordando a los franceses que los ingleses son sus antiquos enemiges," &c. &c.—Philip to Duke of Sesa, his envoy at Rome, 16 March, 1597. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

towns, and to furnish a force in defence of England when attacked. Such was the condition of the kingdom, they said —being, as it was, entirely without fortified cities—that a single battle would imperil the whole realm, so that it was necessary to keep the enemy out of it altogether.[22]

These arguments were not unreasonable, but the inference was surely illogical. The special envoys from the republic had not been instructed to treat about the debt. This had been the subject of perpetual negotiation. It was discussed almost every day by the queen's commissioners at the Hague and by the States' resident minister at London. Olden-Barneveld and the admiral had been sent forth by the States in what in those days was considered great haste to prevent a conclusion of a treaty between their two allies and the common enemy. They had been too late in France, and now, on arriving in England, they found that government steadily drifting towards what seemed the hopeless shipwreck of a general peace.

What must have been the grief of Olden-Barneveld when he heard from the lips of the enlightened Buckhurst that the treaty of 1585 had been arranged to expire—according to the original limitation—with a peace, and that as the States could now make peace and did not choose to do so, her Majesty must be considered as relieved from her contract of alliance, and as justified in demanding repayment of her advances ![23]

To this perfidious suggestion what could the States' envoy reply but that as a peace such as the treaty of 1585 presupposed—to wit, with security for the Protestant religion and for the laws and liberties of the provinces—was impossible, should the States now treat with the king or the cardinal ?

The envoys had but one more interview with the queen, in which she was more benignant in manner but quite as peremptory in her demands. Let the States either thoroughly satisfy her as to past claims and present necessities, or let them be prepared for her immediate negotiation with the

[22] Verhaal, &c., 239. [23] Ibid.

enemy. Should she decide to treat, she would not be unmindful of their interests, she said, nor deliver them over into the enemy's hands. She repeated, however, the absurd opinion that there were means enough of making Philip nominal sovereign of all the Netherlands, without allowing him to exercise any authority over them. As if the most Catholic and most absolute monarch that ever breathed could be tied down by the cobwebs of constitutional or treaty stipulations; as if the previous forty years could be effaced from the record of history.

She asked, too, in case the rumours of the intended transfer of the Netherlands to the cardinal or the Infanta should prove true, which she doubted, whether this arrangement would make any difference in the sentiments of the States.

Barneveld replied that the transfer was still uncertain, but that they had no more confidence in the cardinal or the Infanta than in the King of Spain himself.

On taking leave of the queen the envoys waited upon Lord Burghley, whom they found sitting in an arm-chair in his bedchamber, suffering from the gout and with a very fierce countenance.[24] He made no secret of his opinions in favour of negotiation, said that the contracts made by monarchs should always be interpreted reasonably, and pronounced a warm eulogy on the course pursued by the King of France. It was his Majesty's duty, he said, to seize the best opportunity for restoring repose to his subjects and his realms, and it was the duty of other sovereigns to do the same.

The envoys replied that they were not disposed at that moment to sit in judgment upon the king's actions. They would content themselves with remarking that in their opinion even kings and princes were bound by their contracts, oaths, and pledges before God and man; and with this wholesome sentiment they took leave of the lord high treasurer.[25]

[24] "Toonende een fier gelaat."—Verhaal, &c., 243.

[25] "Wy seyden dat ons niet toe en stonde van de actie van de Coninck

They left London immediately, on the last day of May, without passports or despatches of recal, and embarked at Gravesend in the midst of a gale of wind.

31 May, 1598.

Lord Essex, the sincere friend of the republic, was both surprised and disturbed at their sudden departure, and sent a special courier after them to express his regrets at the unsatisfactory termination to their mission. "My mistress knows very well," said he, "that she is an absolute princess, and that, when her ministers have done their extreme duty, she wills what she wills."[26]

The negotiations between England and Spain were deferred, however, for a brief space, and a special message was despatched to the Hague as to the arrangement of the debt. "Peace at once with Philip," said the queen, "or else full satisfaction of my demands."

Now it was close dealing between such very thrifty and acute bargainers as the queen and the Netherland republic.

Two years before, the States had offered to pay twenty thousand pounds a year on her Majesty's birthday so long as the war should last, and after a peace, eighty thousand pounds annually for four years.[27] The queen, on her part, fixed the sum total of the debt at nearly a million and a half sterling, and required instant payment of at least one hundred thousand pounds on account, besides provision for a considerable annual refunding, assumption by the States of the whole cost of the garrisons in the cautionary towns, and assurance of assistance in case of an attack upon England.[28] Thus there was a whole ocean between the disputants.

Vere and Gilpin were protocolling and marshalling accounts at the Hague, and conducting themselves with much arrogance and bitterness, while, meantime, Barneveld had

te oordelen maer dat wy meinden dat oock Coningen ende Prinsen aen haer contracten, beloften ende eeden voor Godt ende de werelt verbonden waren; daermede wy van den vooschr. Heere Groote Tresorier syn gescheyden."—Verhaal, &c., 244.

[26] Essex to Nassau and Olden-Barneveld, 22 May, 1598. (O. S.)

"Et que ma maitresse scait bien qu'elle est princesse absolue, et que quant ses ministres ont fait leur estreme devoyer elle veult ce qu'elle veult."—Deventer, iii. 247.

[27] Agreement in Bor, IV. 245.

[28] Meteren, 406. Deventer, ii. 258.

hardly had time to set his foot on his native shores before he was sent back again to England at the head of another solemn legation. One more effort was to be made to arrange this financial problem and to defeat the English peace party.

The offer of the year 1596 just alluded to was renewed and instantly rejected. Naturally enough, the Dutch envoys were disposed, in the exhausting warfare which was so steadily draining their finances, to pay down as little as possible on the nail, while providing for what they considered a liberal annual sinking fund.

The English, on the contrary, were for a good round sum in actual cash, and held the threatened negotiation with Spain over the heads of the unfortunate envoys like a whip.

So the queen's counsellors and the republican envoys travelled again and again over the well-worn path. On the 29th June, Buckhurst took Olden-Barneveld into his cabinet, and opened his heart to him, not as a servant of her Majesty, he said, but as a private Englishman.[29] He was entirely for peace. Now that peace was offered to her Majesty, a continuance of the war was unrighteous, and the Lord God's blessing could not be upon it. Without God's blessing no resistance could be made by the queen nor by the States to the enemy, who was ten times more powerful than her Majesty in kingdoms, provinces, number of subjects, and money. He had the pope, the emperor, the Dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, and the republic of Genoa, for his allies. He feared that the war might come upon England, and that they might be fated on one single day to win or lose all. The queen possessed no mines, and was obliged to carry on the war by taxing her people. The king had ever-flowing fountains in his mines ; the queen nothing but a stagnant pool, which, when all the water was pumped out, must in the end be dry. He concluded, therefore, that as her Majesty had no allies but the Netherlands, peace was best for England,

29 June.

[29] Conference between Olden-Barneveld and Buckhurst, in Deventer, ii. 264–266.

and advisable for the provinces. Arrangements could easily be made to limit the absolute authority of Spain.[30]

This highly figurative view of the subject—more becoming to the author of Ferrex and Porrex than to so experienced a statesman as Sackville had become since his dramatic days—did not much impress Barneveld. He answered that, although the King of Spain was unquestionably very powerful, the Lord God was still stronger; that England and the Netherlands together could maintain the empire of the seas, which was of the utmost importance, especially for England; but that if the republic were to make her submission to Spain, and become incorporate with that power, the control of the seas was lost for ever to England.

The Advocate added the unanswerable argument that to admit Philip as sovereign, and then to attempt a limitation of his despotism, was a foolish dream.

Buckhurst repeated that the republic was the only ally of England, that there was no confidence to be placed by her in any other power, and that for himself, he was, as always, very much the friend of the States.

Olden-Barneveld might well have prayed, however, to be delivered from such friends. To thrust one's head into the lion's mouth, while one's friends urge moderation on the noble animal, can never be considered a cheerful or prudent proceeding.

At last, after all offers had been rejected which the envoys had ventured to make, Elizabeth sent for Olden-Barneveld and Caron and demanded their ultimatum within twenty-four hours. Should it prove unsatisfactory, she would at once make peace with Spain.[32]

On the 1st August the envoys accordingly proposed to Cecil and the other ministers to pay thirty thousand pounds a year, instead of twenty thousand, so long as the war should last, but they claimed the right of redeeming the cautionary towns at one hundred thousand pounds each. This seemed

[30] Conference, &c., *ubi sup.* [31] Ibid.
[32] Minutes of Olden-Barneveld. Deventer, ii. 267, 268.

admissible, and Cecil and his colleagues pronounced the affair arranged. But they had reckoned without the queen after all.

Elizabeth sent for Caron as soon as she heard of the agreement, flew into a great rage, refused the terms, swore that she would instantly make peace with Spain, and thundered loudly against her ministers.

"They were great beasts," she said, "if they had stated that she would not treat with the enemy. She had merely intended to defer the negotiations."[33]

So the whole business was to be done over again. At last the sum claimed by the queen, fourteen hundred thousand pounds, was reduced by agreement to eight hundred thousand, and one-half of this the envoys undertook on the part of the States to refund in annual payments of thirty thousand pounds, while the remaining four hundred thousand should be provided for by some subsequent arrangement. All attempts, however, to obtain a promise from the queen to restore the cautionary towns to the republic in case of a peace between Spain and England remained futile.[34]

That was to be a bone of contention for many years.

It was further agreed by the treaty, which was definitely signed on the 16th August, that, in case England were invaded by the common enemy, the States should send to the queen's assistance at least thirty ships of war, besides five thousand infantry and five squadrons of horse.[35] 16 Aug. 1598.

[33] "Sy waren groote beesten, indien sy ons geseit hadden dat sy niet met den viand tracteren soude; sy wilde de handelinge slechts differeren."—Verhaal van Duivenoorde Olden-Barnevelt, enz.," cited by Deventer, ii. 268.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Treaty, *apud* Bor, IV. 476–478.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Negotiations between France and Spain — Conclusion of the treaty of peace — Purchase of the allegiance of the French nobles — Transfer of the Netherlands to Albert and Isabella — Marriage of the Infante and the Infanta — Illness of Philip II. — Horrible nature of his malady — His last hours and death — Review of his reign — Extent of the Spanish dominions — Causes of the greatness of Spain, and of its downfall — Philip's wars and their expenses — The Crown revenues of Spain — Character of the people — Their inordinate self-esteem — Consequent deficiency of labour — Ecclesiastical Government — Revenues of the Church — Characteristics of the Spanish clergy — Foreign commerce of Spain — Governmental system of Philip II. — Founded on the popular ignorance and superstition — Extinction of liberty in Spain — The Holy Inquisition — The work and character of Philip.

WHILE the utterly barren conferences had been going on at Angiers and Nantes between Henry IV. and the republican envoys, the negotiations had been proceeding at Vervins.

President Richardot on behalf of Spain, and Secretary of State Villeroy as commissioner of Henry, were the chief negotiators.[1]

Two old acquaintances, two ancient Leaguers, two bitter haters of Protestants and rebels, two thorough adepts in diplomatic chicane, they went into this contest like gladiators who thoroughly understood and respected each other's skill.

Richardot was recognized by all as the sharpest and most unscrupulous politician in the obedient Netherlands. Villeroy had conducted every intrigue of France during a whole generation of mankind. They scarcely did more than measure swords and test each other's objects, before arriving at a conviction as to the inevitable result of the encounter.

It was obvious at once to Villeroy that Philip was determined to make peace with France in order that the triple alliance might be broken up. It was also known to the

[1] Relazion del Presidente Richardot, April, 1598. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

French diplomatist that the Spanish king was ready for almost every concession to Henry, in order that this object might be accomplished.

All that Richardot hoped to save out of the various conquests made by Spain over France was Calais.

But Villeroy told him that it was useless to say a word on that subject. His king insisted on the restoration of the place. Otherwise he would make no peace. It was enough, he said, that his Majesty said nothing about Navarre.

Richardot urged that at the time when the English had conquered Calais it had belonged to Artois, not to France. It was no more than equitable, then, that it should be retained by its original proprietor.

The general of the Franciscans, who acted as a kind of umpire in the transactions, then took each negotiator separately aside and whispered in his ear.[2]

Villeroy shook his head, and said he had given his ultimatum. Richardot acknowledged that he had something in reserve, upon which the monk said that it was time to make it known.

Accordingly—the two being all ears—Richardot observed that what he was about to state he said with fear and trembling. He knew not what the King of Spain would think of his proposition, but he would, nevertheless, utter the suggestion that Calais should be handed over to the pope.[3]

His Holiness would keep the city in pledge until the war with the rebels was over, and then there would be leisure enough to make definite arrangements on the subject.

Now Villeroy was too experienced a practitioner to be imposed upon by this ingenious artifice. Moreover, he happened to have an intercepted letter in his possession in which Philip told the cardinal that Calais was to be given up if the French made its restitution a *sine quâ non*. So Villeroy did make it a *sine quâ non*, and the conferences soon after terminated in an agreement on the part of Spain to surrender all its conquests in France.[4]

[2] Relazion, &c. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.

Certainly no more profitable peace than this could have been made by the French king under such circumstances, and Philip at the last moment had consented to pay a heavy price for bringing discord between the three friends. The treaty was signed at Vervins on the 2nd May, and contained thirty-five articles. Its basis was that of the treaty of Câteau Cambresis of 1559. Restitution of all places conquered by either party within the dominions of the other since the day of that treaty was stipulated. Henry recovered Calais, Ardres, Dourlens, Blavet, and many other places, and gave up the country of Charolois. Prisoners were to be surrendered on both sides without ransom, and such of those captives of war as had been enslaved at the galleys should be set free.

The pope, the emperor, all his cousins, and those electors, states, and cities under their obedience or control, the Duke of Savoy, the King of Poland and Sweden, the Kings of Denmark and Scotland, the Dukes of Lorraine and Tuscany, the Doge of Venice, the republic of Genoa, and many lesser states and potentates, were included in the treaty. The famous Edict of Nantes in favour of the Protestant subjects of the French king was drawn up and signed in the city of which it bears the name at about the same time with these negotiations. Its publication was, however, deferred until after the departure of the legate from France in the following year.[5]

The treaty of Câteau Cambresis had been pronounced the most disgraceful and disastrous one that had ever been ratified by a French monarch; and surely Henry had now wiped away that disgrace and repaired that disaster. It was natural enough that he should congratulate himself on the rewards which he had gathered by deserting his allies.

He had now sufficient occupation for a time in devising ways and means, with the aid of the indefatigable Béthune, to pay the prodigious sums with which he had purchased the allegiance of the great nobles and lesser gentlemen of

[5] Treaty, *apud* Bor, IV. 445–450. De Thou, xiii. 208, *seqq.*, l. 120.

France. Thirty-two millions of livres were not sufficient to satisfy the claims of these patriots, most of whom had been drawing enormous pensions from the King of Spain up to the very moment, or beyond it, when they consented to acknowledge the sovereign of their own country. Scarcely a great name in the golden book of France but was recorded among these bills of sale.

Mayenne, Lorraine, Guise, Nemours, Mercœur, Montpensier, Joyeuse, Epernon, Brissac, D'Arlincourt, Balagny, Rochefort, Villeroy, Villars, Montespan, Leviston, Beauvillars, and countless others, figured in the great financier's terrible account-book, from Mayenne, set down at the cool amount of three and a half millions, to Beauvoir or Beauvillars at the more modest price of a hundred and sixty thousand livres. "I should appal my readers," said De Béthune, "if I should show to them that this sum makes but a very small part of the amounts demanded from the royal treasury, either by Frenchmen or by strangers, as pay and pension, and yet the total was thirty-two millions."[6]

And now the most Catholic king, having brought himself at last to exchange the grasp of friendship with the great ex-heretic, and to recognize the Prince of Béarne as the legitimate successor of St. Louis, to prevent which consummation he had squandered so many thousands of lives, so many millions of treasure, and brought ruin to so many prosperous countries, prepared himself for another step which he had long hesitated to take.

He resolved to transfer the Netherlands to his daughter Isabella and to the Cardinal Archduke Albert, who, as the king had now decided, was to espouse the Infanta.

The deed of cession was signed at Madrid on the 6th May, 1598. It was accompanied by a letter of the same date from the Prince Philip, heir apparent to the crown. 6 May, 1598.

On the 30th May the Infanta executed a procuration by which she gave absolute authority to her future husband

[6] Sully. Memoires. lib. x. 560.

to rule over the provinces of the Netherlands, Burgundy, and Charolois, and to receive the oaths of the estates and of public functionaries.[7]

It was all very systematically done. No transfer of real estate, no *donatio inter vivos* of mansions and messuages, parks and farms, herds and flocks, could have been effected in a more business-like manner than the gift thus made by the most prudent king to his beloved daughter.

The quit-claim of the brother was perfectly regular.

So also was the power of attorney, by which the Infanta authorised the middle-aged ecclesiastic whom she was about to espouse to take possession in her name of the very desirable property which she had thus acquired.

It certainly never occurred, either to the giver or the receivers, that the few millions of Netherlanders, male and female, inhabiting these provinces in the North Sea, were entitled to any voice or opinion as to the transfer of themselves and their native land to a young lady living in a remote country. For such was the blasphemous system of Europe at that day. Property had rights. Kings, from whom all property emanated, were enfeoffed directly from the Almighty; they bestowed certain privileges on their vassals, but man had no rights at all. He was property, like the ox or the ass, like the glebe which he watered with the sweat of his brow.

The obedient Netherlands acquiesced obediently in these new arrangements. They wondered only that the king should be willing thus to take from his crown its choicest jewels—for it is often the vanity of colonies and dependencies to consider themselves gems.

[7] See all the deeds and documents in Bor, IV. 461–466. Compare Herrera, iii. 766–770.

Very elaborate provisions were made in regard to the children and grandchildren to spring from this marriage, but it was generally understood at the time that no issue was to be expected. The incapacity of the cardinal seems to have been revealed by an indiscretion of the General of Franciscans—diplomatist and father confessor—and was supported by much collateral evidence. Hence all these careful stipulations were a solemn jest, like much of the diplomatic work of this reign. See letter of F. d'Aerssens to States-General, 27 May, 1599, in Lettres et Negotiations de Buzanval et D'Aerssens, par G. G. Vrede, Leide, 1846, p. 190. But compare Soranzo, Relazione, before cited, p. 169.

The republican Netherlanders only laughed at these arrangements, and treated the invitation to transfer themselves to the new sovereigns of the provinces with silent contempt.[8]

The cardinal-archduke left Brussels in September, having accomplished the work committed to him by the power of attorney, and having left Cardinal Andrew of Austria, bishop of Constantia, son of the Archduke Ferdinand, to administer affairs during his absence. Francis de Mendoza, Admiral of Arragon, was entrusted with the supreme military command for the same interval. 14 Sept. 1598.

The double marriage of the Infante of Spain with the Archduchess Margaret of Austria, and of the unfrocked Cardinal Albert of Austria with the Infanta Clara Eugenia Isabella, was celebrated by proxy, with immense pomp, at Ferrara, the pope himself officiating with the triple crown upon his head.[9]

Meantime, Philip II., who had been of delicate constitution all his life, and who had of late years been a confirmed valetudinarian, had been rapidly failing ever since the transfer of the Netherlands in May. Longing to be once more in his favourite retirement of the Escorial, he undertook the journey towards the beginning of June, and was carried thither from Madrid in a litter borne by servants, accomplishing the journey of seven leagues in six days.

When he reached the palace cloister, he was unable to stand. The gout, his life-long companion, had of late so tortured him in the hands and feet that the mere touch of a linen sheet was painful to him. By the middle of July a low fever had attacked him, which rapidly reduced his strength. Moreover, a new and terrible symptom of the utter disintegration of his physical constitution had presented itself. Imposthumes, from which he had suffered on the breast and at the joints, had been opened after the usual ripening applications, and the result was not the hoped relief, but swarms of vermin, innumerable in quantities, and im-

[8] Bor, IV. 467. [9] Ibid. 470–472.

possible to extirpate, which were thus generated and reproduced in the monarch's blood and flesh.

The details of the fearful disorder may have attraction for the pathologist, but have no especial interest for the general reader. Let it suffice, that no torture ever invented by Torquemada or Peter Titelman to serve the vengeance of Philip and his ancestors or the pope against the heretics of Italy or Flanders, could exceed in acuteness the agonies which the most Catholic king was now called upon to endure. And not one of the long line of martyrs, who by decree of Charles or Philip had been strangled, beheaded, burned, or buried alive, ever faced a death of lingering torments with more perfect fortitude, or was sustained by more ecstatic visions of heavenly mercy, than was now the case with the great monarch of Spain.

That the grave-worms should do their office before soul and body were parted, was a torment such as the imagination of Dante might have invented for the lowest depths of his "Inferno."[10]

On the 22nd July, the king asked Dr. Mercado if his sickness was likely to have a fatal termination. The physician, not having the courage at once to give the only possible reply, found means to evade the question. On the 1st August his Majesty's confessor, father Diego de Yepes, after consultation with Mercado, announced to Philip that the only issue to his malady was death. Already he had been lying for ten days on his back, a mass of sores and corruption, scarcely able to move, and requiring four men to turn him in his bed.

He expressed the greatest satisfaction at the sincerity which had now been used, and in the gentlest and most benignant manner signified his thanks to them for thus removing all doubts from his mind, and for giving him information which it was of so much importance for his eternal welfare to possess.

[10] A great English poet has indeed expressed the horrible thought:—

"It is as if the dead could feel
The icy worm about them steal."—BYRON.

His first thought was to request the papal nuncio, Gaetano, to despatch a special courier to Rome to request the pope's benediction. This was done, and it was destined that the blessing of his Holiness should arrive in time.

He next prepared himself to make a general confession, which lasted three days, father Diego having drawn up at his request a full and searching interrogatory. The confession may have been made the more simple, however, by the statement which he made to the priest, and subsequently repeated to the Infante his son, that in all his life he had never consciously done wrong to any one. If he had ever committed an act of injustice, it was unwittingly, or because he had been deceived in the circumstances. This internal conviction of general righteousness was of great advantage to him in the midst of his terrible sufferings, and accounted in great degree for the gentleness, thoughtfulness for others, and perfect benignity, which, according to the unanimous testimony of many witnesses, characterised his conduct during this whole sickness.

After he had completed his long general confession, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to him. Subsequently, the same rites were more briefly performed every few days.

His sufferings were horrible, but no saint could have manifested in them more gentle resignation or angelic patience. He moralized on the condition to which the greatest princes might thus be brought at last by the hand of God, and bade the prince observe well his father's present condition, in order that, when he too should be laid thus low, he might likewise be sustained by a conscience void of offence. He constantly thanked his assistants and nurses for their care, insisted upon their reposing themselves after their daily fatigues, and ordered others to relieve them in their task.

He derived infinite consolation from the many relics of saints, of which, as has been seen, he had made plentiful provision during his long reign. Especially a bone of St.

Alban, presented to him by Clement VIII., in view of his present straits, was of great service. With this relic, and with the arm of St. Vincent of Ferrara, and the knee-bone of St. Sebastian, he daily rubbed his sores, keeping the sacred talismans ever in his sight on the altar, which was not far from his bed. He was much pleased when the priests and other bystanders assured him that the remains of these holy men would be of special efficacy to him, because he had cherished and worshipped them in times when misbelievers and heretics had treated them with disrespect.

On a sideboard in his chamber a human skull was placed, and upon this skull—in ghastly mockery of royalty, in truth, yet doubtless in the conviction that such an exhibition showed the superiority of anointed kings even over death—he ordered his servants to place a golden crown.[11] And thus, during the whole of his long illness, the Antic held his state, while the poor mortal representative of absolute power lay living still, but slowly mouldering away.

With perfect composure, and with that minute attention to details which had characterised the king all his lifetime, and was now more evident than ever, he caused the provisions for his funeral obsequies to be read aloud one day by Juan Ruys de Velasco, in order that his children, his ministers, and the great officers of state who were daily in attendance upon him, might thoroughly learn their lesson before the time came for performing the ceremony.

"Having governed my kingdom for forty years," said he, "I now give it back, in the seventy-first year of my age, to God Almighty, to whom it belongs, recommending my soul into His blessed hands, that His Divine Majesty may do what He pleases therewith."

He then directed that after his body should have been kept as long as the laws prescribed, it should be buried thus:—

The officiating bishop was to head the procession, bearing the crucifix, and followed by the clergy.

[11] Bor, IV. 473.

The Adelantado was to come next, trailing the royal standard along the ground. Then the Duke of Novara was to appear, bearing the crown on an open salver, covered with a black cloth, while the Marquis of Avillaer carried the sword of state.

The coffin was to be borne by eight principal grandees, clad in mourning habiliments, and holding lighted torches.

The heir apparent was to follow, attended by Don Garcia de Loyasa, who had just been consecrated, in the place of Cardinal Albert, as Archbishop of Toledo.

The body was to be brought to the church, and placed in the stately tomb already prepared for its reception. "Mass being performed," said the king, "the prelate shall place me in the grave which shall be my last house until I go to my eternal dwelling. Then the prince, third king of my name, shall go into the cloister of St. Jerome at Madrid, where he shall keep nine days mourning. My daughter, and her aunt—my sister, the ex-empress—shall for the same purpose go to the convent of the grey sisters." [12]

The king then charged his successor to hold the Infanta in especial affection and consideration; "for," said he, "she has been my mirror, yea, the light of my eyes." He also ordered that the Marquis of Mondejar be taken from prison and set free, on condition never to show himself at Court. The wife of Antonio Perez was also to be released from prison, in order that she might be immured in a cloister, her property being bestowed upon her daughters.

As this unfortunate lady's only crime consisted in her husband's intrigue with the king's mistress, Princess Eboli, in which she could scarcely be considered an accomplice, this permission to exchange one form of incarceration for another did not seem an act of very great benignity.

Philip further provided that thirty thousand masses should be said for his soul, five hundred slaves liberated from the galleys, and five hundred maidens provided with marriage portions.

[12] Bor, IV. 473, 474.

After these elaborate instructions had been read, the king ordered a certain casket to be brought to him and opened in his presence. From this he took forth a diamond of great price and gave it to the Infanta, saying that it had belonged to her mother, Isabella of France. He asked the prince if he consented to the gift. The prince answered in the affirmative.

He next took from the coffer a written document, which he handed to his son, saying, "Herein you will learn how to govern your kingdoms."

Then he produced a scourge, which he said was the instrument with which his father, the emperor, had been in the habit of chastising himself during his retreat at the monastery of Juste. He told the by-standers to observe the imperial blood by which the lash was still slightly stained.

As the days wore on he felt himself steadily sinking, and asked to receive extreme unction. As he had never seen that rite performed he chose to rehearse it beforehand, and told Ruys Velasco, who was in constant attendance upon him, to go for minute instructions on the subject to the Archbishop of Toledo. The sacrament having been duly administered, the king subsequently, on the 1st September, desired to receive it once more. The archbishop, fearing that the dying monarch's strength would be insufficient for the repetition of the function, informed him that the regulations of the Church required in such cases only a compliance with certain trifling forms, as the ceremony had been already once thoroughly carried out. But the king expressed himself as quite determined that the sacrament should be repeated in all its parts; that he should once more be anointed—to use the phrase of brother Francis Neyen—with the oil which holy athletes require in their wrestle with death.

This was accordingly done in the presence of his son and daughter, and of his chief secretaries, Christopher de Moura and John de Idiaquez, besides the Counts Chinchon, Fuensalido, and several other conspicuous personages. He was

especially desirous that his son should be present, in order that, when he too should come to die, he might not find himself, like his father, in ignorance of the manner in which this last sacrament was to be performed.

When it was finished he described himself as infinitely consoled, and as having derived even more happiness from the rite than he had dared to anticipate.

Thenceforth he protested that he would talk no more of the world's affairs. He had finished with all things below, and for the days or hours still remaining to him he would keep his heart exclusively fixed upon Heaven. Day by day as he lay on his couch of unutterable and almost unexampled misery, his confessors and others read to him from religious works, while with perfect gentleness he would insist that one reader should relieve another, that none might be fatigued.

On the 11th September he dictated these words to Christopher de Moura, who was to take them to Diego de Yepes, the confessor: — 11 Sept.

"Father Confessor, you are in the place of God, and I protest thus before His presence that I will do all that you declare necessary for my salvation. Thus upon you will be the responsibility for my omissions, because I am ready to do all."

Finding that the last hour was approaching, he informed Don Fernando de Toledo where he could find some candles of our lady of Montserrat, one of which he desered to keep in his hand at the supreme moment. He also directed Ruys de Velasco to take from a special shrine—which he had indicated to him six years before—a crucifix which the emperor his father had held upon his death-bed. All this was accomplished according to his wish.

He had already made arrangements for his funeral procession, and had subsequently provided all the details of his agony. It was now necessary to give orders as to the particulars of his burial.

He knew that decomposition had made such progress even

while he was still living as to render embalming impossible. He accordingly instructed Don Christopher to see his body wrapped in a shroud just as it lay, and to cause it to be placed in a well-soldered metallic coffin already provided. The coffin of state, in which the leaden one was to be enclosed, was then brought into the chamber by his command, that he might see if it was entirely to his taste. Having examined it, he ordered that it should be lined with white satin and ornamented with gold nails and lace-work. He also described a particular brocade of black and gold, to be found in the jewel-room, which he desired for the pall.

Next morning he complained to Don Christopher that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper had not been administered to him for several days. It was urged that his strength was deemed insufficient, and that, as he had received that rite already four times during his illness, and extreme unction twice, it was thought that the additional fatigue might be spared him. But as the king insisted, the sacrament was once more performed and prayers were read. He said with great fervour many times, "Pater, non mea voluntas, sed tua fiat." He listened, too, with much devotion to the Psalm, "As the hart panteth for the water-brooks;" and he spoke faintly at long intervals of the Magdalen, of the prodigal son, and of the paralytic.

12 Sept. 1598.

When these devotional exercises had been concluded, father Diego expressed the hope to him that he might then pass away, for it would be a misfortune by temporary convalescence to fall from the exaltation of piety which he had then reached. The remark was heard by Philip with an expression of entire satisfaction.

That day both the Infanta and the prince came for the last time to his bedside to receive his blessing. He tenderly expressed his regret to his daughter that he had not been permitted to witness her marriage, but charged her never to omit any exertion to augment and sustain the holy Roman Catholic religion in the Netherlands. It was in the interest

of that holy Church alone that he had endowed her with those provinces, and he now urged it upon her with his dying breath to impress upon her future husband these his commands to both.

His two children took leave of him with tears and sobs. As the prince left the chamber he asked Don Christopher who it was that held the key to the treasury.

The secretary replied, "It is I, Sir." The prince demanded that he should give it into his hands. But Don Christopher excused himself, saying that it had been entrusted to him by the king, and that without his consent he could not part with it. Then the prince returned to the king's chamber, followed by the secretary, who narrated to the dying monarch what had taken place.

"You have done wrong," said Philip; whereupon Don Christopher, bowing to the earth, presented the key to the prince.

The king then feebly begged those about his bedside to repeat the dying words of our Saviour on the cross, in order that he might hear them and repeat them in his heart as his soul was taking flight.

His father's crucifix was placed in his hands, and he said distinctly, "I die like a good Catholic, in faith and obedience to the holy Roman Church." Soon after these last words had been spoken, a paroxysm, followed by faintness, came over him, and he lay entirely still.

They had covered his face with a cloth, thinking that he had already expired, when he suddenly started, with great energy, opened his eyes, seized the crucifix again from the hand of Don Fernando de Toledo, kissed it, and fell back again into agony.

The archbishop and the other priests expressed the opinion that he must have had, not a paroxysm, but a celestial vision, for human powers would not have enabled him to arouse himself so quickly and so vigorously as he had done at that crisis.

He did not speak again, but lay unconsciously dying for some hours, and breathed his last at five in the morning of Sunday the 13th September.[13] 13 Sept.

His obsequies were celebrated according to the directions which he had so minutely given.

These volumes will have been written in vain if it be now necessary to recal to my readers the leading events in the history of the man who had thus left the world where, almost invisible himself, he had so long played a leading part. It may not be entirely useless, however, to throw a parting glance at a character which it has been one of the main objects of this work, throughout its whole course, to pourtray. My theme has been the reign of Philip II. because, as the less is included in the greater, the whole of that reign, with the exception of a few episodes, is included in the vast movement out of which the Republic of the United Netherlands was born and the assailed independence of France and England consolidated. The result of Philip's efforts to establish a universal monarchy was to hasten the decline of the empire which he had inherited, by aggravating the evils which had long made that downfall inevitable.

It is from no abstract hatred to monarchy that I have dwelt with emphasis upon the crimes of this king, and upon the vices of the despotic system, as illustrated during his lifetime. It is not probable that the military, monarchical system —founded upon conquests achieved by barbarians and pirates of a distant epoch over an effete civilization and over antique institutions of intolerable profligacy—will soon come to an end in the older world. And it is the business of Europeans so to deal with the institutions of their inheritance or their choice as to ensure their steady melioration and to provide for

[13] The last illness of Philip is described with every minute detail, derived from narratives of eye-witnesses, by Bor, IV. 472–474; and by Herrera, iii. 774–778. Compare also the Relazione of F. Soranzo already cited, 150–153.

the highest interests of the people. It matters comparatively little by what name a government is called, so long as the intellectual and moral development of mankind, and the maintenance of justice among individuals, are its leading principles. A government, like an individual, may remain far below its ideal; but, without an ideal, governments and individuals are alike contemptible. It is tyranny only—whether individual or popular—that utters its feeble sneers at the ideologists, as if mankind were brutes to whom instincts were all in all and ideas nothing. Where intellect and justice are enslaved by that unholy trinity—Force, Dogma, and Ignorance—the tendency of governments, and of those subjected to them, must of necessity be retrograde and downward.

There can be little doubt to those who observe the movements of mankind during the course of the fourteen centuries since the fall of the Roman Empire—a mere fragment of human history—that its progress, however concealed or impeded, and whether for weal or woe, is towards democracy; for it is the tendency of science to liberate and to equalize the physical and even the intellectual forces of humanity. A horse and a suit of armour would now hardly enable the fortunate possessor of such advantages to conquer a kingdom, nor can wealth and learning be monopolised in these latter days by a favoured few. Yet veneration for a crown and a privileged church—as if without them and without their close connection with each other law and religion were impossible—makes hereditary authority sacred to great masses of mankind in the old world. The obligation is the more stringent, therefore, on men thus set apart as it were by primordial selection for ruling and instructing their fellow-creatures, to keep their edicts and their practice in harmony with divine justice. For these rules cannot be violated with impunity during a long succession of years, and it is usually left for a comparatively innocent generation to atone for the sins of their forefathers. If history does not teach this it teaches nothing, and as the rules of morality, whether for

individuals or for nations, are simple and devoid of mystery, there is the less excuse for governments which habitually and cynically violate the eternal law.

Among self-evident truths not one is more indisputable than that which, in the immortal words of our Declaration of Independence, asserts the right of every human being to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ; but the only happiness that can be recognised by a true statesman as the birthright of mankind is that which comes from intellectual and moral development, and from the subjugation of the brutal instincts.

A system according to which clowns remain clowns through all the ages, unless when extraordinary genius or fortunate accident enables an exceptional individual to overleap the barrier of caste, necessarily retards the result to which the philosopher looks forward with perfect faith.

For us, whose business it is to deal with, and, so far as human fallibility will permit, to improve our inevitable form of government—which may degenerate into the most intolerable of polities unless we are ever mindful that it is yet in its rudimental condition ; that, although an immense step has been taken in the right direction by the abolition of caste, the divorce of Church and State, and the limitation of intrusion by either on the domain of the individual, it is yet only a step from which, without eternal vigilance, a falling back is very easy ; and that here, more than in other lands, ignorance of the scientific and moral truths on which national happiness and prosperity depend, deserves bitter denunciation—for us it is wholesome to confirm our faith in democracy, and to justify our hope that the People will prove itself equal to the awful responsibility of self-government by an occasional study of the miseries which the opposite system is capable of producing. It is for this reason that the reign of the sovereign whose closing moments have just been recorded is especially worthy of a minute examination, and I still invite a parting glance at the spectacle thus presented, before the curtain falls.

The Spanish monarchy in the reign of Philip II. was not

only the most considerable empire then existing, but probably the most powerful and extensive empire that had ever been known. Certainly never before had so great an agglomeration of distinct and separate sovereignties been the result of accident. For it was owing to a series of accidents—in the common acceptation of that term—that Philip governed so mighty a realm. According to the principle that vast tracts of the earth's surface, with the human beings feeding upon them, were transferable in fee-simple from one man or woman to another by marriage, inheritance, or gift, a heterogeneous collection of kingdoms, principalities, provinces, and wildernesses had been consolidated, without geographical continuity, into an artificial union—the populations differing from each other as much as human beings can differ, in race, language, institutions, and historical traditions, and resembling each other in little, save in being the property alike of the same fortunate individual.

Thus the dozen kingdoms of Spain, the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands, the kingdoms of the Two Sicilies, the duchy of Milan, and certain fortresses and districts of Tuscany, in Europe ; the kingdom of Barbary, the coast of Guinea, and an indefinite and unmeasured expanse of other territory, in Africa ; the controlling outposts and cities all along the coast of the two Indian peninsulas, with as much of the country as it seemed good to occupy, the straits and the great archipelagoes, so far as they had been visited by Europeans, in Asia ; Peru, Brazil, Mexico, the Antilles—the whole recently discovered fourth quarter of the world in short, from the "Land of Fire" in the South to the frozen regions of the North—as much territory as the Spanish and Portuguese sea-captains could circumnavigate and the pope in the plentitude of his power and his generosity could bestow on his fortunate son, in America ; all this enormous proportion of the habitable globe was the private property of Philip, who was the son of Charles, who was the son of Joanna, who was the daughter of Isabella, whose husband was Ferdinand. By what seems to us the most whimsical

of political arrangements, the Papuan islander, the Calabrian peasant, the Amsterdam merchant, the semi-civilized Aztec, the Moor of Barbary, the Castilian grandee, the roving Camanche, the Guinea negro, the Indian Brahmin, found themselves—could they but have known it—fellow-citizens of one commonwealth. Statutes of family descent, aided by fraud, force, and chicane, had annexed the various European sovereignties to the crown of Spain ; the genius of a Genoese sailor had given to it the New World, and more recently the conquest of Portugal, torn from hands not strong enough to defend the national independence, had vested in the same sovereignty those Oriental possessions which were due to the enterprise of Vasco de Gama, his comrades and successors. The voyager, setting forth from the straits of Gibraltar, circumnavigating the African headlands and Cape Comorin, and sailing through the Molucca channel and past the isles which bore the name of Philip in the Eastern sea, gave the hand at last to his adventurous comrade, who, starting from the same point, and following westward in the track of Magellaens and under the Southern Cross, coasted the shore of Patagonia, and threaded his path through unmapped and unnumbered clusters of islands in the Western Pacific ; and during this spanning of the earth's whole circumference not an inch of land or water was traversed that was not the domain of Philip.

For the sea, too, was his as well as the dry land.

From Borneo to California the great ocean was but a Spanish lake, as much the king's private property as his fish-ponds at the Escorial with their carp and perch. No subjects but his dared to navigate those sacred waters. Not a common highway of the world's commerce, but a private path for the gratification of one human being's vanity, had thus been laid out by the bold navigators of the sixteenth century.

It was for the Dutch rebels to try conclusions upon this point, as they had done upon so many others, with the master of the land and sea. The opening scenes therefore in the

great career of maritime adventure and discovery by which these republicans were to make themselves famous will soon engage the reader's attention.

Thus the causes of what is called the greatness of Spain are not far to seek. Spain was not a nation, but a temporary and factitious conjunction of several nations, which it was impossible to fuse into a permanent whole, but over whose united resources a single monarch for a time disposed. And the very concentration of these vast and unlimited powers, fortuitous as it was, in this single hand, inspiring the individual, not unnaturally, with a consciousness of superhuman grandeur, impelled him to those frantic and puerile efforts to achieve the impossible which resulted in the downfall of Spain. The man who inherited so much material greatness believed himself capable of destroying the invisible but omnipotent spirit of religious and political liberty in the Netherlands, of trampling out the national existence of France and of England, and of annexing those realms to his empire. It has been my task to relate, with much minuteness, how miserably his efforts failed.

But his resources were great. All Italy was in his hands, with the single exception of the Venetian republic; for the Grand Duke of Florence and the so-called republic of Genoa were little more than his vassals, the pope was generally his other self, and the Duke of Savoy was his son-in-law. Thus his armies, numbering usually a hundred thousand men, were supplied from the best possible sources. The Italians were esteemed the best soldiers for siege, assault, light skirmishing. The German heavy troopers and arquebuseers were the most effective for open field-work, and these were to be purchased at reasonable prices and to indefinite amount from any of the three or four hundred petty sovereigns to whom what was called Germany belonged. The Sicilian and Neapolitan pikemen, the Milanese light-horse, belonged exclusively to Philip, and were used, year after year, for more than a generation of mankind, to fight battles in which they had no more interest than had their follow-subjects in the Moluccas

or in Mexico, but which constituted for them personally as lucrative a trade on the whole as was afforded them at that day by any branch of industry.

Silk, corn, wine, and oil were furnished in profusion from these favoured regions, not that the inhabitants might enjoy life, and, by accumulating wealth, increase the stock of human comforts and contribute to intellectual and scientific advancement, but in order that the proprietor of the soil might feed those eternal armies ever swarming from the south to scatter desolation over the plains of France, Burgundy, Flanders, and Holland, and to make the crown of Spain and the office of the Holy Inquisition supreme over the world. From Naples and Sicily were derived in great plenty the best materials and conveniences for ship-building and marine equipment. The galleys and the galley-slaves furnished by these subject realms formed the principal part of the royal navy. From distant regions, a commerce which in Philip's days had become oceanic supplied the crown with as much revenue as could be expected in a period of gross ignorance as to the causes of the true grandeur and the true wealth of nations. Especially from the mines of Mexico came an annual average of ten or twelve millions of precious metals, of which the king took twenty-five per cent. for himself.

It would be difficult and almost superfluous to indicate the various resources placed in the hands of this one personage, who thus controlled so large a portion of the earth. All that breathed or grew belonged to him, and most steadily was the stream of blood and treasure poured through the sieve of his perpetual war. His system was essentially a gigantic and perpetual levy of contributions in kind, and it is only in this vague and unsatisfactory manner that the revenues of his empire can be stated. A despot really keeps no accounts, nor need to do so, for he is responsible to no man for the way in which he husbands or squanders his own. Moreover, the science of statistics had not a beginning of existence in those days, and the most common facts can hardly be obtained,

even by approximation. The usual standard of value, the commodity which we call money—gold or silver—is well known to be at best a fallacious guide for estimating the comparative wealth of individuals or of nations at widely different epochs. The dollar of Philip's day was essentially the same bit of silver that it is in our time in Spain, Naples, Rome, or America, but even should an elaborate calculation be made as to the quantity of beef or bread or broadcloth to be obtained for that bit of silver in this or that place in the middle of the sixteenth century, the result, as compared with prices now prevalent, would show many remarkable discrepancies. Thus a bushel of wheat at Antwerp during Philip's reign might cost a quarter of a dollar, in average years, and there have been seasons in our own time when two bushels of wheat could have been bought for a quarter of a dollar in Illinois. Yet if, notwithstanding this, we should allow a tenfold value in exchange to the dollar of Philip's day, we should be surprised at the meagreness of his revenues, of his expenditures, and of the debts which at the close of his career brought him to bankruptcy; were the sums estimated in coin.

Thus his income was estimated by careful contemporary statesmen at what seemed to them the prodigious annual amount of sixteen millions of dollars. He carried on a vast war without interruption during the whole of his forty-three years' reign against the most wealthy and military nations of Christendom not recognising his authority, and in so doing he is said to have expended a sum total of seven hundred millions of dollars—a statement which made men's hair stand on their heads. Yet the American republic, during its civil war to repress the insurrection of the slaveholders, has spent nominally as large a sum as this every year; and the British Empire in time of profound peace spends half as much annually. And even if we should allow sixteen millions to have represented the value of a hundred and sixty millions —a purely arbitrary supposition—as compared with our times, what are a hundred and sixty millions of dollars, or

thirty-three millions of pounds sterling as the whole net revenue of the greatest empire that had ever existed in the world, when compared with the accumulated treasures over which civilized and industrious countries can now dispose? Thus the power of levying men and materials in kind constituted the chief part of the royal power, and, in truth, very little revenue in money was obtained from Milan or Naples, or from any of the outlying European possessions of the crown.

Eight millions a year were estimated as the revenue from the eight kingdoms incorporated under the general name of Castile, while not more than six hundred thousand came from the three kingdoms which constituted Arragon.[14] The chief sources of money receipts were a tax of ten per cent. upon sales, paid by the seller, called Alcavala, and the Almoxarifalgo or tariff upon both imports and exports. Besides these imposts he obtained about eight hundred thousand dollars a year by selling to his subjects the privilege of eating eggs upon fast-days, according to the permission granted him by the pope in the bull called the Cruzada.[15] He received another annual million from the Sussidio and the Excusado. The first was a permission originally given by the popes to levy six hundred thousand dollars a year upon ecclesiastical property for equipment of a hundred war-galleys against the Saracens, but which had more recently established itself as a regular tax to pay for naval hostilities against Dutch and English heretics—a still more malignant species of unbelievers in the orthodox eyes of the period. The Excusado was the right accorded to the king always to select from the Church possessions a single benefice and to appropriate its fruit—a levy commuted generally for four hundred thousand dollars a year. Besides these regular sources of income, large but irregular amounts of money were picked up by his Majesty in small sums, through monks sent about the country simply as beggars, under no special license, to collect alms from rich and poor for sustaining the war

[14] Soranzo. [15] Ibid.

against the infidels of England and Holland. A certain Jesuit, father Sicily by name, had been industrious enough at one period in preaching this crusade to accumulate more than a million and a half, so that a facetious courtier advised his sovereign to style himself thenceforth king, not of the two, but of the three Sicilies, in honour of the industrious priest.

It is worthy of remark that at different periods during Philip's reign, and especially towards its close, the whole of his regular revenue was pledged to pay the interest on his debts, save only the Sussidio and the Cruzada. Thus the master of the greatest empire of the earth had at times no income at his disposal except the alms he could solicit from his poorest subjects to maintain his warfare against foreign miscreants, the levy on the Church for war-galleys, and the proceeds of his permission to eat meat on Fridays.[16] This sounds like an epigram, but it is a plain, incontestable fact.

Thus the revenues of his foreign dominions being nearly consumed by their necessary expenses, the measure of his positive wealth was to be found in the riches of Spain. But Spain at that day was not an opulent country. It was impossible that it should be rich, for nearly every law, according to which the prosperity of a country becomes progressive, was habitually violated. It is difficult to state even by approximation the amount of its population, but the kingdoms united under the crown of Castile were estimated by contemporaries to contain eight millions, while the kingdom of Portugal, together with those annexed to Arragon and the other provinces of the realm, must have numbered half as many. Here was a populous nation in a favoured land, but the foundation of all wealth was sapped by a perverted moral sentiment.

Labour was esteemed dishonourable. The Spaniard, from highest to lowest, was proud, ignorant, and lazy. For a people endowed by nature with many noble qualities — courage, temperance, frugality, endurance, quickness of perception, a

[16] Soranzo. Compare Rise of Dutch Republic, vol. i. pt. ii. c. iii

high sense of honour, a reverence for law—the course of the national history had proved as ingeniously bad a system of general education as could well be invented.

The eternal contests, century after century, upon the soil of Spain between the crescent and the cross, and the remembrance of the ancient days in which Oriental valour and genius had almost extirpated Germanic institutions and Christian faith from the peninsula, had inspired one great portion of the masses with a hatred, amounting almost to insanity, towards every form of religion except the Church of Rome, towards every race of mankind except the Goths and Vandals. Innate reverence for established authority had expanded into an intensity of religious emotion and into a fanaticism of loyalty which caused the anointed monarch leading true believers against infidels to be accepted as a god. The highest industrial and scientific civilization that had been exhibited upon Spanish territory was that of Moors and Jews. When in the course of time those races had been subjugated, massacred, or driven into exile, not only was Spain deprived of its highest intellectual culture and its most productive labour, but intelligence, science, and industry were accounted degrading, because the mark of inferior and detested peoples.

The sentiment of self-esteem, always a national characteristic, assumed an almost ludicrous shape. Not a ragged Biscayan muleteer, not a swineherd of Estremadura, that did not imagine himself a nobleman because he was not of African descent. Not a half-starved, ignorant brigand, gaining his living on the highways and byways by pilfering or assassination, that did not kneel on the church pavement and listen to orisons in an ancient tongue, of which he understood not a syllable, with a sentiment of Christian self-complacency to which Godfrey of Bouillon might have been a stranger. Especially those born towards the northern frontier, and therefore farthest removed from Moorish contamination, were proudest of the purity of their race. To be an Asturian or a Gallician, however bronzed by sun and wind, was to be fur-

nished with positive proof against suspicion of Moorish blood ; but the sentiment was universal throughout the peninsula.[17]

It followed as a matter of course that labour of any kind was an impeachment against this gentility of descent. To work was the province of Moors, Jews, and other heretics ; of the Marani or accursed, miscreants and descendants of miscreants ; of the Sanbeniti or infamous, wretches whose ancestors had been convicted by the Holy Inquisition of listening, however secretly, to the Holy Scriptures as expounded by other lips than those of Roman priests. And it is a remarkable illustration of this degradation of labour and of its results, that in the reign of Philip twenty-five thousand individuals of these dishonoured and comparatively industrious classes, then computed at four millions in number in the Castilian kingdoms alone, had united in a society which made a formal offer to the king to pay him two thousand dollars a head if the name and privileges of hidalgo could be conferred upon them.[18] Thus an inconsiderable number of this vilest and most abject of the population—oppressed by taxation which was levied exclusively upon the low, and from which not only the great nobles but mechanics and other hidalgos were exempt—had been able to earn and to lay by enough to offer the monarch fifty millions of dollars to purchase themselves out of semi-slavery into manhood, and

[17] La gente bassa e minuta fa numero ed e poverissimo essendo tutta priva d'industria e di questa si serve quando bisogna per soldati. E poveri ancora nel loro grado chiamar si possono quelli che sono fra li principi e gli artefici perchè vogliono vivere con fasto, sono superbi assai hanno poche entrate e non le governano stimano vergogna il far esercizio che possa aver apparenza di mercanzia onde essendo senza industria e senza roba e volendo spendere e grandeggiare la fanno male assai perchè sdegnano li minori e dalli maggiori non vogliono essere superati però si vede quasi tutta la Spagna assai mendica e piena di povera gente fuori che dove abita la Corte, le Metropoli dei regni dove si riducono le Signori e si esercitano le arti ed in Siviglia per il commercio dell' Indie. . . . . Li Biscaylini si stimano nobili d' incontaminata discendenza sopra tutti il popoli di Spagna perche essendo di sito direttamente opposte all' Africa di dove entrarono i Mori e lontani da quelle parti delle Spagna dove vivono li Marani che sono li più in Portogallo professano che non siano entrati nel loro paese mai queste infezioni e ne vanno altieri e gloriosi assai. Li regni di Granata, Valenza, ed Andalusia, all' incontro sono tutti pieni di Moreschi, le altre parti della Spagna sono contaminate ed infette pur di questi Moreschi e de Marani ancora," &c. &c.—Soranzo.

[18] Soranzo.

yet found their offer rejected by an almost insolvent king. Nothing could exceed the idleness and the frivolity of the upper classes, as depicted by contemporary and not unfriendly observers. The nobles were as idle and as ignorant as their inferiors. They were not given to tournays nor to the delights of the chase and table, but were fond of brilliant festivities, dancing, gambling, masquerading, love-making, and pompous exhibitions of equipage, furniture, and dress. These diversions—together with the baiting of bulls and the burning of Protestants—made up their simple round of pleasures. When they went to the wars they scorned all positions but that of general, whether by land or sea, and as war is a trade which requires an apprenticeship, it is unnecessary to observe that these grandees were rarely able to command, having never learned to obey. The poorer Spaniards were most honourably employed perhaps—so far as their own mental development was concerned—when they were sent with pike and arquebus to fight heretics in France and Flanders. They became brave and indomitable soldiers when exported to the seat of war, and thus afforded proof—by strenuously doing the hardest physical work that human beings can be called upon to perform, campaigning year after year amid the ineffable deprivations, dangers, and sufferings which are the soldier's lot—that it was from no want of industrv or capacity that the lower masses of Spaniards in that age were the idle, listless, dice-playing, begging, filching vagabonds into which cruel history and horrible institutions had converted them at home.

It is only necessary to recal these well-known facts to understand why one great element of production—human labour—was but meagrely supplied. It had been the deliberate policy of the Government for ages to extirpate the industrious classes, and now that a great portion of Moors and Jews were exiles and outcasts, it was impossible to supply their place by native workmen. Even the mechanics, who condescended to work with their hands in the towns, looked down alike upon those who toiled in the field and upon those

who attempted to grow rich by traffic. A locksmith or a wheelwright who could prove four descents of western blood called himself a son of somebody—a hidalgo[19]—and despised the farmer and the merchant. And those very artisans were careful not to injure themselves by excessive industry, although not reluctant by exorbitant prices to acquire in one or two days what might seem a fair remuneration for a week, and to impress upon their customers that it was rather by way of favour that they were willing to serve them at all.

Labour being thus deficient, it is obvious that there could hardly have been a great accumulation, according to modern ideas, of capital. That other chief element of national wealth, which is the result of generations of labour and of abstinence, was accordingly not abundant. And even those accretions of capital, which in the course of centuries had been inevitable, were as clumsily and inadequately diffused as the most exquisite human perverseness could desire. If the object of civil and political institutions had been to produce the greatest ill to the greatest number, that object had been as nearly attained at last in Spain as human imperfection permits; the efforts of government and of custom coming powerfully to the aid of the historical evils already indicated.

It is superfluous to say that the land belonged not to those who lived upon it—but subject to the pre-eminent right of the crown—to a small selection of the human species. Moderate holdings, small farms, peasant proprietorships, were unknown. Any kind of terrestrial possession, in short, was as far beyond the reach of those men who held themselves

[19] "Gli Idalghi sono per il piu gli artefici che godono il privilegio di questo titolo, o per grazia ottenuta dal re . . . . ovvero per discendenza e per natura, e questi sono persone nate di buon sangue e di padri benemeriti dalla corona che s' hanno acquistato questo titolo con alcuna fazione in servizio del Re. Di questo nome d' Idalgo per natura non possono godare se non quelli, che nascono per lo meno in quattro gradi di padre e di madre che non sieno stati nè Moreschi nè Marani a differenza delli Cristiani nuovi che non hanno questo candor di nascimento descendendo da persone infette da questa macchia. . . . . Gli artefici sono comodi e vivono tutti molto lautamente trattano con gran sprezzatura, lavorano poco e per poterlo fare si fanno pagare le fatture quello che non si può credere, volendo, con la fatica che essi possono fare in un giorno vivere e godere tutta una settimana."—Soranzo.

so haughtily and esteemed themselves so inordinately, as were the mountains in the moon.

The great nobles—and of real grandees of Spain there were but forty-nine,[20] although the number of titled families was much larger—owned all the country, except that vast portion of it which had reposed for ages in the dead-hand of the Church. The law of primogeniture, strictly enforced, tended with every generation to narrow the basis of society. Nearly every great estate was an entail, passing from eldest son to eldest son, until these were exhausted, in which case a daughter transferred the family possessions to a new house. Thus the capital of the country—meagre at best in comparison with what it might have been, had industry been honoured instead of being despised, had the most intelligent and most diligent classes been cherished rather than hunted to death or into obscure dens like vermin—was concentrated in very few hands. Not only was the accumulation less than it should have been, but the slenderness of its diffusion had nearly amounted to absolute stagnation. The few possessors of capital wasted their revenues in unproductive consumption. The millions of the needy never dreamed of the possibility of deriving benefit from the capital of the rich, nor would have condescended to employ it, nor known how to employ it, had its use in any form been vouchsafed to them. The surface of Spain, save only around the few royal residences, exhibited no splendour of architecture, whether in town or country, no wonders of agricultural or horticultural skill, no monuments of engineering and constructive genius in roads, bridges, docks, warehouses, and other ornamental and useful fabrics, or in any of the thousand ways in which man facilitates intercourse among his kind and subdues nature to his will.[21]

[20] Soranzo.

[21] "Le citta . . . non riescono nè per magnificenza di edificii nè per bellezza di strade, nè per grandezza di piazze nè per esquisitezza di altri ornamenti molto conspicui nè troppo riguardevoli," &c., &c. . . . . "non si ha in Spagna cognizione d' architettura, perciò non si veggono belle fabbriche, nè per le terre nè per le ville, non giardini, non vigne, non altra cosa di delizia nè di magnificenza fuori che nelle fabbriche reali: non s'intendono di fortificazioni e quelli che non la vanno a imparare fuori di là non intendono la disciplina militare, perciò non hanno nel paese ne ingegneri nè buoni capitani."—Soranzo.

Yet it can never be too often repeated that it is only the Spaniard of the sixteenth century, such as extraneous circumstances had made him, that is here depicted; that he, even like his posterity and his ancestors, had been endowed by Nature with some of her noblest gifts. Acuteness of intellect, wealth of imagination, heroic qualities of heart, and hand, and brain, rarely surpassed in any race, and manifested on a thousand battle-fields, and in the triumphs of a magnificent and most original literature, had not been able to save a whole nation from the disasters and the degradation which the mere words Philip II. and the Holy Inquisition suggest to every educated mind.

Nor is it necessary for my purpose to measure exactly the space which separated Spain from the other leading monarchies of the day. That the standard of civilization was a vastly higher one in England, Holland, or even France—torn as they all were with perpetual civil war—no thinker will probably deny; but as it is rather my purpose at this moment to exhibit the evils which may spring from a perfectly bad monarchical system, as administered by a perfectly bad king, I prefer not to wander at present from the country which was ruled for almost half a century by Philip II.

Besides the concentration of a great part of the capital of the country in a very small number of titled families, still another immense portion of the national wealth belonged, as already intimated, to the Church.

There were eleven archbishops, at the head of whom stood the Archbishop of Toledo, with the enormous annual revenue of three hundred thousand dollars. Next to him came the Archbishop of Seville, with one hundred and fifty thousand dollars yearly, while the income of the others varied from fifty thousand to twenty thousand dollars respectively.[22]

There were sixty-two bishops, with annual incomes ranging from fifty thousand to six thousand dollars. The churches, also, of these various episcopates were as richly endowed as the great hierarchs themselves.[23] But without fatiguing the

[22] Soranzo. [23] Ibid.

reader with minute details, it is sufficient to say that one-third of the whole annual income of Spain and Portugal belonged to the ecclesiastical body.[24] In return for this enormous proportion of the earth's fruits, thus placed by the caprice of destiny at their disposal, these holy men did very little work in the world. They fed their flocks neither with bread nor with spiritual food. They taught little, preached little, dispensed little in charity. Very few of the swarming millions of naked and hungry throughout the land were clothed or nourished out of these prodigious revenues of the Church. The constant and avowed care of those prelates was to increase their worldly possessions, to build up the fortunes of their respective families, to grow richer and richer at the expense of the people whom for centuries they had fleeced. Of gross crime, of public ostentatious immorality, such as had made the Roman priesthood of that and preceding ages loathsome in the sight of man and God, the Spanish Church-dignitaries were innocent. Avarice, greediness, and laziness were their characteristics. It is almost superfluous to say that, while the ecclesiastical princes were rolling in this almost fabulous wealth, the subordinate clergy, the mob of working priests, were needy, half-starved mendicants.[25]

From this rapid survey of the condition of the peninsula it will seem less surprising than it might do at first glance that the revenue of the greatest monarch of the world was rated

[24] Soranzo.

[25] "Non si esercitano questi Prelati per lo più nelle opere pié come dovrebbero non sono molto elemosinarij e non attendono a fare il loro ufficio pastorale con quelle carità che sarebbe forse lor debito, poco insegnano poco riprendono poco dispensano e poco pascono le loro pecore nè col pane nè colla parola attendono all' utilità propria ed arrichire loro stessi e le lor famiglie, ed accumulare ed a far bene alle lor case di quello che loro avanza delle richezze del re, sebbene per dire il vero nel resto sono per lo piu di buoni costumi nè si sente occasione di scandalo per la vita che menano e contentandosi del solo gusto di arrichire nel restante vivono con termine di grand' esempio: ed in somma in queste entrate ecclesiastiche che toccano al clero che parleró poi di quelle che sono del re si fa conto che sia compreso il terzo delle entrate di quoi regni, ma oltre li prelati e li Beneficieti delle lor chiese il resto del clero è mendico e bisognoso." —Soranzo.

These are the words, not of a democrat or Protestant, but of a devoted Papist and a most haughty aristocrat —the Venetian ambassador.

at the small amount—even after due allowance for the difference of general values between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries—of sixteen millions of dollars. The King of Spain was powerful and redoubtable at home and abroad, because accident had placed the control of a variety of separate realms in his single hand. At the same time Spain was poor and weak, because she had lived for centuries in violation of the principles on which the wealth and strength of nations depend. Moreover, every one of those subject and violently annexed nations hated Spain with undying fervour,[26] while an infernal policy—the leading characteristics of which were to sow dissensions among the nobles, to confiscate their property on all convenient occasions, and to bestow it upon Spaniards and other foreigners; to keep the discontented masses in poverty, but to deprive them of the power or disposition to unite with their superiors in rank in demonstrations against the crown—had sufficed to suppress any extensive revolt in the various Italian states united under Philip's sceptre. Still more intense than the hatred of the Italians was the animosity which was glowing in every Portuguese breast against the Spanish sway; while even the Arragonese were only held in subjection by terror, which, indeed, in one form or another, was the leading instrument of Philip's government.

It is hardly necessary to enlarge upon the regulations of Spain's foreign commerce; for it will be enough to repeat the phrase that in her eyes the great ocean from east to west was a Spanish lake, sacred to the ships of the king's subjects alone. With such a simple code of navigation coming in aid of the other causes which impoverished the land, it may be believed that the maritime traffic of the country would dwindle into the same exiguous proportions which characterised her general industry.

Moreover, it should never be forgotten that, although the various kingdoms of Spain were politically conjoined by their

[26] This dominion of the barbarians stinks in every one's nostrils: "A ogn uno puzza questo barbaro dominio," was the energetic expression of Machiavelli, even before Philip was born, and certainly the tyranny did not grow sweeter during his reign.

personal union under one despot, they were commercially distinct. A line of custom-houses separated each province from the rest, and made the various inhabitants of the peninsula practically strangers to each other. Thus there was less traffic between Castile, Biscay, and Arragon than there was between any one of them and remote foreign nations. The Biscayans, for example, could even import and export commodities to and from remote countries by sea, free of duty, while their merchandize to and from Castile was crushed by imposts. As this ingenious perversity of positive arrangements came to increase the negative inconveniences caused by the almost total absence of tolerable roads, canals, bridges, and other means of intercommunication, it may be imagined that internal traffic—the very life-blood of every prosperous nation—was very nearly stagnant in Spain. As an inevitable result, the most thriving branch of national industry was that of the professional smuggler, who, in the pursuit of his vocation, did his best to aid Government in sapping the wealth of the nation.[27]

The whole accumulated capital of Spain, together with the land—in the general sense which includes not only the soil but the immovable property of a country—being thus exclusively owned by the crown, the church, and a very small number of patrician families, while the supply of labour—owing to the special causes which had converted the masses of the people into paupers ashamed to work but not unwilling to beg or to rob—was incredibly small, it is obvious that, so long as the same causes continued in operation, the downfall of the country was a logical result from which there was no escape. Nothing but a general revolution of mind and hand against the prevalent system, nothing but some great destructive but regenerating catastrophe, could redeem the people.

And it is the condition of the people which ought always to be the prominent subject of interest to those who study the records of the Past. It is only by such study that we can

[27] See Lafuente, Hist. Gen. de España, t. xv p. 148.

derive instruction from history, and enable ourselves, however dimly and feebly, to cast the horoscope of younger nations. Human history, so far as it has been written, is at best a mere fragment; for the few centuries or year-thousands of which there is definite record are as nothing compared to the millions of unnumbered years during which man has perhaps walked the earth. It may be as practicable therefore to derive instruction from a minute examination in detail of a very limited period of time and space, and thus to deduce general rules for the infinite future, during which our species may be destined to inhabit this planet, as by a more extensive survey, which must however be at best a limited one. Men die, but Man is immortal, and it would be a sufficiently forlorn prospect for humanity if we were not able to discover causes in operation which would ultimately render the system of Philip II. impossible in any part of the globe. Certainly, were it otherwise, the study of human history would be the most wearisome and unprofitable of all conceivable occupations. The festivities of courts, the magnificence of an aristocracy, the sayings and doings of monarchs and their servants, the dynastic wars, the solemn treaties, the Ossa upon Pelion of diplomatic and legislative rubbish by which, in the course of centuries, a few individuals or combinations of individuals have been able to obstruct the march of humanity, and have essayed to suspend the operation of elemental laws—all this contains but little solid food for grown human beings. The condition of the brave and quick-witted Spanish people in the latter half of the sixteenth century gives more matter for reflection and possible instruction.

That science is the hope of the world, that ignorance is the real enslaver of mankind, and therefore the natural ally of every form of despotism, may be assumed as an axiom, and it was certainly the ignorance and superstition of the people upon which the Philippian policy was founded.

A vast mass, entirely uneducated, half fed, half clothed, unemployed, and reposing upon a still lower and denser

stratum—the millions namely of the "Accursed," of the Africans, and last and vilest of all, the "blessed" descendants of Spanish protestants whom the Holy Office had branded with perpetual infamy[28] because it had burned their progenitors—this was the People; and it was these paupers and outcasts, nearly the whole nation, that paid all the imposts of which the public revenue was composed. The great nobles, priests, and even the hidalgos, were exempt from taxation.[29] Need more be said to indicate the inevitable ruin of both government and people?

And it was over such a people, and with institutions like these, that Philip II. was permitted to rule during forty-three years. His power was absolute.[30] With this single phrase one might as well dismiss any attempt at specification. He made war or peace at will with foreign nations. He had power of life and death over all his subjects. He had unlimited control of their worldly goods. As he claimed supreme jurisdiction over their religious opinions also, he was master of their minds, bodies, and estates. As a matter of course, he nominated and removed at will every executive functionary, every judge, every magistrate, every military or civil officer; and moreover, he not only selected, according to the license tacitly conceded to him by the pontiff, every archbishop, bishop, and other Church dignitary, but, through his great influence at Rome, he named most of the cardinals, and thus controlled the election of the popes. The whole machinery of society, political, ecclesiastical, military, was in his single hand. There was a show of provincial privilege here and there in different parts of Spain, but it was but the phantom of that ancient municipal liberty which it had been the especial care of his father and his great-grandfather to

[28] "Segnati e notati di perpetua infamia—vivono quindi disperati ed arrabbiatissimi." Soranzo.

[29] Soranzo.

[30] "Ha assoluto imperio sopra le vite e facoltà delli sudditi, è libero padron della pace e della guerra, ha piena potestà sopra le leggi, sopra la giustizia e sopra le grazie, ha la nominazione di tutti i beneficii ecclesiastici, delle tre ordini di cavalleria . . . . crea li Presidenti li Vice-re, li Luogotenenti, Governatori, Capitani, i generali degli eserciti e delle armate, e per la grande autorità che tiene con i Pontefici si può dire che faccia ancora i Cardinali."—Soranzo.

destroy. Most patiently did Philip, by his steady inactivity, bring about the decay of the last ruins of free institutions in the peninsula. The councils and legislative assemblies were convoked and then wearied out in waiting for that royal assent to their propositions and transactions, which was deferred intentionally, year after year, and never given. Thus the time of the deputies was consumed in accomplishing infinite nothing, until the moment arrived when the monarch, without any violent stroke of state, could feel safe in issuing decrees and pragmatic edicts; thus reducing the ancient legislative and consultative bodies to nullity, and substituting the will of an individual for a constitutional fabric.[31] To criticise the expenses of government or to attempt interference with the increase of taxation became a sorry farce. The forms remained in certain provinces after the life had long since fled. Only in Arragon had the ancient privileges seemed to defy the absolute authority of the monarch; and it was reserved for Antonio Perez to be the cause of their final extirpation. The grinning skulls of the Chief Justice of that kingdom and of the boldest and noblest advocates and defenders of the national liberties, exposed for years in the market-place, with the record of their death-sentence attached, informed the Spaniards, in language which the most ignorant could read, that the crime of defending a remnant of human freedom and constitutional law was sure to draw down condign punishment.[32] It was the last time in that age that even the ghost of extinct liberty was destined to revisit the soil of Spain. It mattered not that the immediate cause for pursuing Perez was his successful amour with the king's mistress, nor that the crime of which he was formally accused was the deadly offence of Calvinism, rather than his intrigue

[31] Lafuente, xv. 151.

[32] "E sebbene questa loro prerogativa e queste lore licenze furono in gran parte levate e per il resto assai mortificati dal re passato troncando molte teste dei principali e facendole anco poner in publica mostra con le iscrizioni appresso dei loro delitti a perpetuo terrore dei posteri, estirpando li capi, piantondo cittadelle, introducendo guardie e aggrandendo l' autorità all' Ufficio della Inquisizione che fu uno dei maggiori morsi per dorarli con che si potesse frenare la loro ferocia," &c.&c.—Soranzo, Relazione, 1597–1602. Barozzi and Berchet. Relazioni, &c., Ser. i. vol. i.

with the Eboli and his assassination of Escovedo ; for it was in the natural and simple sequence of events that the last vestige of law or freedom should be obliterated wherever Philip could vindicate his sway. It must be admitted, too, that the king seized this occasion to strike a decisive blow with a promptness very different from his usual artistic sluggishness. Rarely has a more terrible epigram been spoken by man than the royal words which constituted the whole trial and sentence of the Chief Justice of Arragon, for the crime of defending the law of his country : "You will take John of Lanuza, and you will have his head cut off." This was the end of the magistrate and of the constitution which he had defended.[33]

His power was unlimited. A man endowed with genius and virtue, and possessing the advantages of a consummate education, could have perhaps done little more than attempt to mitigate the general misery, and to remove some of its causes. For it is one of the most pernicious dogmas of the despotic system, and the one which the candid student of history soonest discovers to be false, that the masses of mankind are to look to any individual, however exalted by birth or intellect, for their redemption. Woe to the world if the nations are never to learn that their fate is and ought to be in their own hands ; that their institutions, whether liberal or despotic, are the result of the national biography and of the national character, not the work of a few individuals whose names have been preserved by capricious Accident as heroes and legislators. Yet there is no doubt that, while comparatively powerless for good, the individual despot is capable of almost infinite mischief. There have been few men known to history who have been able to accomplish by their own exertions so vast an amount of evil as the king who had just died. If Philip possessed a single virtue it has eluded the conscientious research of the writer of these pages. If there are vices—as possibly there are—from which he was exempt, it is

[33] "Prendereis a don Juan de Lanuza y hareisle luego cortar la cabeza. See Lafuente, xv. 131, 132.

because it is not permitted to human nature to attain perfection even in evil. The only plausible explanation—for palliation there is none—of his infamous career is that the man really believed himself not a king but a god. He was placed so high above his fellow-creatures as, in good faith perhaps, to believe himself incapable of doing wrong; so that, whether indulging his passions or enforcing throughout the world his religious and political dogmas, he was ever conscious of embodying divine inspirations and elemental laws. When providing for the assassination of a monarch, or commanding the massacre of a townful of Protestants; when trampling on every oath by which a human being can bind himself; when laying desolate with fire and sword, during more than a generation, the provinces which he had inherited as his private property, or in carefully maintaining the flames of civil war in foreign kingdoms which he hoped to acquire; while maintaining over all Christendom a gigantic system of bribery, corruption, and espionage, keeping the noblest names of England and Scotland on his pension-lists of traitors, and impoverishing his exchequer with the wages of iniquity paid in France to men of all degrees, from princes of blood like Guise and Mayenne down to the obscurest of country squires, he ever felt that these base or bloody deeds were not crimes, but the simple will of the godhead of which he was a portion. He never doubted that the extraordinary theological system which he spent his life in enforcing with fire and sword was right, for it was a part of himself. The Holy Inquisition, thoroughly established as it was in his ancestral Spain, was a portion of the regular working machinery by which his absolute kingship and his superhuman will expressed themselves. A tribunal which performed its functions with a celerity, certainty, and invisibility resembling the attributes of Omnipotence; which, like the pestilence, entered palace or hovel at will, and which smote the wretch guilty or suspected of heresy with a precision against which no human ingenuity or sympathy could guard—such an institution could not but be dear to his heart. It was inevitable

that the extension and perpetuation of what he deemed its blessings throughout his dominions should be his settled purpose. Spain was governed by an established terrorism. It is a mistake to suppose that Philip was essentially beloved in his native land, or that his religious and political system was heartily accepted because consonant to the national character. On the contrary, as has been shown, a very large proportion of the inhabitants were either secretly false to the Catholic faith, or descended at least from those who had expiated their hostility to it with their lives. But the Grand Inquisitor was almost as awful a personage as the king or the pope. His familiars were in every village and at every fireside, and from their fangs there was no escape. Millions of Spaniards would have rebelled against the crown or accepted the reformed religion, had they not been perfectly certain of being burned or hanged at the slightest movement in such a direction.[34] The popular force in the course of the political combinations of centuries seemed at last to have been eliminated. The nobles, exempt from taxation, which crushed the people to the earth, were the enemies rather than the chief-

[34] "Però cosi questi come li Marani e li Moreschi tratti da quella disperazione che suole anco negli animi vili ed abbietti eccitare spiriti di furore e d' ardire sariano inclinati ad ogni sollevazione e ribellione sempre che loro se ne presentasse opportuna occasione: ma tanto gli uni come gli altri convengono stare quieti per le ragione che ho detto e di più perche avendo il re tutti i grandi e tutto il clero ch' e poderosissimo in tutto affetto dipendente dalla Maestà Sua e col severissimo rigore della giustizia e dell' officio della Inquisizione che è come diro a suo luogo ditremenda autorità in tutta la Spagna, lasciando spuntare cosa per piccola che sia e tiene i popoli non solo a freno ma in perpetuo terrore privi di poter per alcuna via macchinare o tentare novità di alcuna sorte." . . . . "Per non lasciar infettar il paese di questo diabolico morbo d'eresie, con tutto che il pericolo sia stato sempre e sia tuttavia grandissimo per la vicinità della Francia, per la diversità dei popoli della Spagna, perciocchè li Moreschi e li Marani abbracciarieno prontamente ogni occasione che lor si presentasse di sollevazione, apririano volentieri l' adito e si fariano facilmente compagni a chi volesse tentar commozione in quei regni per qualunque cagione si volesse, e quella della religione sarebbe la più facile. . . . . La facilità che tengono li Spaguaoli nel credere cio che loro viene affermato, che nasce da ignoranza aprirebbe la strada a chi volesse seminarvi nuove opinioni molto facile. . . . . La gran quantità di beni ecclesiastici, che vi sono alletteria molti che avessero pensiero d' introdurvi novità e sedizioni a spessassarne la Chiesa per impadronirsene . . . . in somma si può dire che il rigore cosi grande di questo officio (Inquisizione) mantiene il rito della vera religione in Spagna che senza questo si può grandemente temere che per tanti Moreschi e Marani che sono sparsi per il paese si vedriano per questo rispetto di religione dei movimenti e delle commozioni importanti."

tains and champions of the lower classes in any possible struggle with a crown to which they were united by ties of interest as well as of affection, while the great churchmen, too, were the immediate dependants and of course the firm supporters of the king. Thus the people, without natural leaders, without organisation, and themselves divided into two mutually hostile sections, were opposed by every force in the State. Crown, nobility, and clergy; all the wealth and all that there was of learning, were banded together to suppress the democratic principle.[35] But even this would hardly have sufficed to extinguish every spark of liberty, had it not been for the potent machinery of the Inquisition; nor could that perfection of terrorism have become an established institution but for the extraordinary mixture of pride and superstition of which the national character had been, in the course of the national history, compounded. The Spanish portion of the people hated the nobles, whose petty exactions and oppressions were always visible; but they had a reverential fear of the unseen monarch, as the representative both of the great unsullied Christian nation to which the meanest individual was proud to belong, and of the God of wrath who had decreed the extermination of all unbelievers. The "accursed" portion of the people were sufficiently disloyal at heart, but were too much crushed by oppression and contempt to imagine themselves men. As to the Netherlanders, they did not fight originally for independence. It was not

[35] "Perciocchè de' principi non più temere chè non hanno alcuna autorità con li popoli non fortezze per ritirarsi, non seguito non obbedienza de' loro vassalli, non buona intelligenza fra loro, non stimati dalla plebe, odiati dai proprii sudditi, che sono tiranneggiati da loro, in mal concetto della gente minuta per la durezza che usano nei pagamenti, oltre che questi fanno una particolar professione di sostentare con la loro fedeltà la grandezza della corona e stimano questa esser propria e particolar gloria della nazione Spagnuola e di loro medesimi sopra tutti; perciocchè quell' alterezza d' animo che fa si che sdegnarebbero d' esser soggetti ad altro principe che al re di Spagna opera in modo che umiliandoli a questo, reputano che sia lor grandezza sostenendo quella corona viver soggetti al maggior re del mondo e che altri che un principe tale non sia degno di dominarli. Li popoli poi non hanno nè capi nè modo di far machinazione non tengono appoggio di principi forestieri non vi è persona che con giusta pretensione potesse eccitar gli altri, no v' essendo alcuno di sangue regio che potesse ragionevolmente pretendere." — Soranzo,

until after a quarter of a century of fighting that they ever thought of renouncing their allegiance to Philip. They fought to protect themselves against being taxed by the king without the consent of those constitutional assemblies which he had sworn to maintain, and to save themselves and their children from being burned alive if they dared to read the Bible. Independence followed after nearly a half-century of fighting, but it would never have been obtained, or perhaps demanded, had those grievances of the people been redressed.

Of this perfect despotism Philip was thus the sole administrator. Certainly he looked upon his mission with seriousness, and was industrious in performing his royal functions. But this earnestness and seriousness were, in truth, his darkest vices; for the most frivolous voluptuary that ever wore a crown would never have compassed a thousandth part of the evil which was Philip's life-work. It was because he was a believer in himself, and in what he called his religion, that he was enabled to perpetrate such a long catalogue of crimes. When an humble malefactor is brought before an ordinary court of justice, it is not often, in any age or country, that he escapes the pillory or the gallows because, from his own point of view, his actions, instead of being criminal, have been commendable, and because the multitude and continuity of his offences prove him to have been sincere. And because anointed monarchs are amenable to no human tribunal, save to that terrible assize which the People, bursting its chain from time to time in the course of the ages, sets up for the trial of its oppressors, and which is called Revolution, it is the more important for the great interests of humanity that before the judgment-seat of History a crown should be no protection to its wearer. There is no plea to the jurisdiction of history, if history be true to itself.

As for the royal criminal called Philip II., his life is his arraignment, and these volumes will have been written in vain if a specification is now required.

Homicide such as was hardly ever compassed before by

one human being was committed by Philip when in the famous edict of 1568 he sentenced every man, woman, and child in the Netherlands to death. That the whole of this population, three millions or more, were not positively destroyed was because no human energy could suffice to execute the diabolical decree. But Alva, toiling hard, accomplished much of this murderous work. By the aid of the "Council of Blood," and of the sheriffs and executioners of the Holy Inquisition, he was able sometimes to put eight hundred human beings to death in a single week for the crimes of Protestantism or of opulence, and at the end of half a dozen years he could boast of having strangled, drowned, burned, or beheaded somewhat more than eighteen thousand of his fellow-creatures. These were some of the non-combatant victims; for of the tens of thousands who perished during his administration alone, in siege and battle, no statistical record has been preserved.

In face of such wholesale crimes, of these forty years of bloodshed, it is superfluous to refer to such isolated misdeeds as his repeated attempts to procure the assassination of the Prince of Orange, crowned at last by the success of Balthazar Gerard, nor to his persistent efforts to poison the Queen of England; for the enunciation of all these murders or attempts at murder would require a repetition of the story which it has been one of the main purposes of these volumes to recite.

For indeed it seems like mere railing to specify his crimes. Their very magnitude and unbroken continuity, together with their impunity, give them almost the appearance of inevitable phenomena. The horrible monotony of his career stupefies the mind until it is ready to accept the principle of evil as the fundamental law of the world.

His robberies, like his murders, were colossal. The vast system of confiscation set up in the Netherlands was sufficient to reduce unnumbered innocent families to beggary, although powerless to break the spirit of civil and religious liberty or to pay the expenses of subjugating a people. Not

often in the world's history have so many thousand individuals been plundered by a foreign tyrant for no crime, save that they were rich enough to be worth robbing. For it can never be too often repeated that those confiscations and extortions were perpetrated upon Catholics as well as Protestants, monarchists as well as rebels; the possession of property making proof of orthodoxy or of loyalty well-nigh impossible.

Falsehood was the great basis of the king's character, which perhaps derives its chief importance, as a political and psychological study, from this very fact. It has been shown throughout the whole course of this history, by the evidence of his most secret correspondence, that he was false, most of all, to those to whom he gave what he called his heart. Granvelle, Alva, Don John, Alexander Farnese, all those, in short, who were deepest in his confidence experienced in succession his entire perfidy, while each in turn was sacrificed to his master's sleepless suspicion. The pope himself was often as much the dupe of the Catholic monarch's faithlessness as the vilest heretic had ever been. Could the great schoolmaster of iniquity for the sovereigns and politicians of the south have lived to witness the practice of the monarch who had most laid to heart the precepts of the "Prince," he would have felt that he had not written in vain, and that his great paragon of successful falsehood, Ferdinand of Arragon, had been surpassed by the great grandson. For the ideal perfection of perfidy, foreshadowed by the philosopher who died in the year of Philip's birth, was thoroughly embodied at last by this potentate. Certainly Nicholas Macchiavelli could have hoped for no more docile pupil. That all men are vile, that they are liars, scoundrels, poltroons, and idiots alike—ever ready to deceive and yet easily to be duped, and that he only is fit to be king who excels his kind in the arts of deception;[36] by this great maxim of the Florentine, Philip

[36] "Perchè degli uomini si può dir questo generalmente che sieno ingrati, volubili, simulatori, fuggitori de' pericoli, cupidi di guadagno: e mentre fai lor bene sono tutti tuoi, ti offeriscono il sangue, la roba, la vita, ed i figli come di sopra dissi, quando il bene è discosto, ma quando ti si appressa si revoltano, e quel Principe che si è tutto fondato in su le parole

was ever guided. And those well-known texts of hypocrisy, strewn by the same hand, had surely not fallen on stony ground when received into Philip's royal soul.

"Often it is necessary, in order to maintain power, to act contrary to faith, contrary to charity, contrary to humanity, contrary to religion. . . . . A prince ought therefore to have great care that from his mouth nothing should ever come that is not filled with those five qualities, and that to see and hear him he should appear all piety, all faith, all integrity, all humanity, all religion. And nothing is more necessary than to seem to have this last-mentioned quality. . . . . Every one sees what you seem, few perceive what you are." [37]

Surely this hand-book of cant had been Philip's *vade mecum* through his life's pilgrimage.

It is at least a consolation to reflect that a career controlled by such principles came to an ignominious close. Had the mental capacity of this sovereign been equal to his criminal intent, even greater woe might have befallen the world. But his intellect was less than mediocre. His passion for the bureau, his slavery to routine, his puerile ambition personally to superintend details which could have been a thousand times better administered by subordinates, proclaimed every day the narrowness of his mind. His diligence in reading, writing, and commenting upon despatches may excite admiration only where there has been no opportunity of judging of his labours by personal inspection. Those familiar with the dreary displays of his penmanship must admit that such work could have been at least as well done by a copying clerk of average capacity. His ministers were men of

loro, trovandosi nudo d' altri preparamenti revina." . . . . "Non puo un signor prudente ne debbe osservar la fede quando tale osservanzia gli torni contro e che sono spente le cagioni che la feciono promettere.

"E se gli uomini fussero tutti buoni questo precetto non saria buono, ma perchè son tristi e non l'osserverebbono a te, tu ancora non l'hai de osservare a loro . . . Ma e necessario questa natura (di volpe) saperla ben colorire ed essere gran simulatore e dissimulatore, e sono tanto simplici gli uomini e tanto obbediscono alle necessità presenti, che colui che inganna troverà sempre chi si lascerà ingannare."—Il Principe, cap. xvii. xviii.

[37] Il Principe, cap. xviii

respectable ability, but he imagined himself, as he advanced in life, far superior to any counsellor that he could possibly select, and was accustomed to consider himself the first statesman in the world.

His reign was a thorough and disgraceful failure. Its opening scene was the treaty of Câteau Cambresis, by which a triumph over France had been achieved for him by the able generals and statesmen of his father, so humiliating and complete as to make every French soldier or politician gnash his teeth. Its conclusion was the treaty of Vervins with the same power, by which the tables were completely turned, and which was as utterly disgraceful to Spain as that of Câteau Cambresis had been to France. He had spent his life in fighting with the spirit of the age—that invincible power of which he had not the faintest conception—while the utter want of adaptation of his means to his ends often bordered, not on the ludicrous, but the insane.

He attempted to reduce the free Netherlands to slavery and to papacy. Before his death they had expanded into an independent republic, with a policy founded upon religious toleration and the rights of man. He had endeavoured all his life to exclude the Béarnese from his heritage and to place himself or his daughter on the vacant throne; before his death Henry IV. was the most powerful and popular sovereign that had ever reigned in France. He had sought to invade and to conquer England, and to dethrone and assassinate its queen. But the queen outwitted, outgeneralled, and outlived him; English soldiers and sailors, assisted by their Dutch comrades in arms, accomplished on the shores of Spain what the Invincible Armada had in vain essayed against England and Holland; while England, following thenceforth the opposite system to that of absolutism and the Inquisition, became, after centuries of struggles towards the right, the most powerful, prosperous, and enlightened kingdom in the world.

His exchequer, so full when he ascended the throne as to excite the awe of contemporary financiers, was reduced before

his death to a net income of some four millions of dollars. His armies, which had been the wonder of the age in the earlier period of his reign for discipline, courage, and every quality on which military efficiency depends, were in his later years a horde of starving, rebellious brigands, more formidable to their commanders than to the foe. Mutiny was the only organised military institution that was left in his dominions, while the Spanish Inquisition, which it was the fell purpose of his life from youth upwards to establish over the world, became a loathsome and impossible nuisance everywhere but in its natal soil.

If there be such a thing as historical evidence, then is Philip II. convicted before the tribunal of impartial posterity of every crime charged in his indictment. He lived seventy-one years and three months, he reigned forty-three years. He endured the martyrdom of his last illness with the heroism of a saint, and died in the certainty of immortal bliss as the reward of his life of evil.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Commercial prospects of Holland — Travels of John Huygen van Linschoten — Their effect on the trade and prosperity of the Netherlands — Progress of nautical and geographical science — Maritime exploration — Fantastic notions respecting the polar regions — State of nautical science — First arctic expedition — Success of the voyagers — Failure of the second expedition — Third attempt to discover the north-east passage — Discovery of Spitzbergen — Scientific results of the voyage — Adventures in the frozen regions — Death of William Barendz — Return of the voyagers to Amsterdam — Southern expedition against the Spanish power — Disasters attendant upon it — Extent of Dutch discovery.

DURING a great portion of Philip's reign the Netherlanders, despite their rebellion, had been permitted to trade with Spain. A spectacle had thus been presented of a vigorous traffic between two mighty belligerents, who derived from their intercourse with each other the means of more thoroughly carrying on their mutual hostilities. The war fed their commerce, and commerce fed their war. The great maritime discoveries at the close of the fifteenth century had enured quite as much to the benefit of the Flemings and Hollanders as to that of the Spaniards and Portuguese, to whom they were originally due. Antwerp and subsequently Amsterdam had thriven on the great revolution of the Indian trade which Vasco de Gama's voyage around the Cape had effected. The nations of the Baltic and of farthest Ind now exchanged their products on a more extensive scale and with a wider sweep across the earth than when the mistress of the Adriatic alone held the keys of Asiatic commerce. The haughty but intelligent oligarchy of shopkeepers, which had grown so rich and attained so eminent a political position from its magnificent monopoly, already saw the sources of its grandeur drying up before its eyes, now that the world's trade—for the first time in human history—had become oceanic.

In Holland, long since denuded of forests, were great markets of timber, whither shipbuilders and architects came from all parts of the world to gather the utensils for their craft. There, too, where scarcely a pebble had been deposited in the course of the geological transformations of our planet, were great artificial quarries of granite, and marble, and basalt. Wheat was almost as rare a product of the soil as cinnamon, yet the granaries of Christendom, and the Oriental magazines of spices and drugs, were found chiefly on that barren spot of earth. There was the great international mart where the Osterling, the Turk, the Hindoo, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean traders stored their wares and negotiated their exchanges ; while the curious and highly-prized products of Netherland skill—broadcloths, tapestries, brocades, laces, substantial fustians, magnificent damasks, finest linens —increased the mass of visible wealth piled mountains high upon that extraordinary soil which produced nothing and teemed with everything.

After the incorporation of Portugal with Spain however many obstacles were thrown in the way of the trade from the Netherlands to Lisbon and the Spanish ports. Loud and bitter were the railings uttered, as we know, by the English sovereign and her statesmen against the nefarious traffic which the Dutch republic persisted in carrying on with the common enemy. But it is very certain that although the Spanish armadas would have found it comparatively difficult to equip themselves without the tar and the timber, the cordage, the stores, and the biscuits furnished by the Hollanders, the rebellious commonwealth, if excluded from the world's commerce, in which it had learned to play so controlling a part, must have ceased to exist. For without foreign navigation the independent republic was an inconceivable idea. Not only would it have been incapable of continuing the struggle with the greatest monarch in the world, but it might as well have buried itself once and for ever beneath the waves from which it had scarcely emerged. Commerce and Holland were simply synonymous

terms. Its morsel of territory was but the wharf to which the republic was occasionally moored; its home was in every ocean and over all the world. Nowhere had there ever existed before so large a proportion of population that was essentially maritime. They were born sailors—men and women alike—and numerous were the children who had never set foot on the shore. At the period now treated of the republic had three times as many ships and sailors as any one nation in the world. Compared with modern times, and especially with the gigantic commercial strides of the two great Anglo-Saxon families, the statistics both of population and of maritime commerce in that famous and most vigorous epoch would seem sufficiently meagre. Yet there is no doubt that in the relative estimate of forces then in activity it would be difficult to exaggerate the naval power of the young commonwealth. When therefore, towards the close of Philip II.'s reign, it became necessary to renounce the carrying trade with Spain and Portugal, by which the communication with India and China was effected, or else to submit to the confiscation of Dutch ships in Spanish ports, and the confinement of Dutch sailors in the dungeons of the Inquisition, a more serious dilemma was presented to the statesmen of the Netherlands than they had ever been called upon to solve.

For the splendid fiction of the Spanish lake was still a formidable fact. Not only were the Portuguese and Spaniards almost the only direct traders to the distant East, but even had no obstacles been interposed by Government, the exclusive possession of information as to the course of trade, the pre-eminent practical knowledge acquired by long experience of that dangerous highway around the world at a time when oceanic navigation was still in its infancy, would have given a monopoly of the traffic to the descendants of the bold discoverers who first opened the great path to the world's commerce.

The Hollanders as a nation had never been engaged in the direct trade around the Cape of Good Hope. Fortunately

however at this crisis in their commercial destiny there was a single Hollander who had thoroughly learned the lesson which it was so necessary that all his countrymen should now be taught. Few men of that period deserve a more kindly and more honourable remembrance by posterity for their contributions to science and the progress of civilization than John Huygen van Linschoten, son of a plain burgher of West Friesland. Having always felt a strong impulse to study foreign history and distant nations and customs, he resolved at the early age of seventeen "to absent himself from his fatherland, and from the conversation of friends and relatives," in order to gratify this inclination for self-improvement. After a residence of two years in Lisbon he departed for India in the suite of the Archbishop of Goa, and remained in the East for nearly thirteen years. Diligently examining all the strange phenomena which came under his observation and patiently recording the results of his researches day by day and year by year, he amassed a fund of information which he modestly intended for the entertainment of his friends when he should return to his native country. It was his wish that "without stirring from their firesides or counting-houses" they might participate with him in the gratification and instruction to be derived from looking upon a world then so strange, and for Europeans still so new. He described the manners and customs, the laws, the religions, the social and political institutions, of the ancient races who dwelt in either peninsula of India. He studied the natural history, the botany, the geography of all the regions which he visited. Especially the products which formed the material of a great traffic ; the system of culture, the means of transportation, and the course of commerce, were examined by him with minuteness, accuracy, and breadth of vision. He was neither a trader nor a sailor, but a man of letters, a scientific and professional traveller. But it was obvious when he returned, rich with the spoils of oriental study during thirteen years of life, that the results of his researches were worthy of a wider circulation than that which he had origin-

ally contemplated. His work was given to the public in the year 1596, and was studied with avidity not only by men of science but by merchants and seafarers. He also added to the record of his Indian experiences a practical manual for navigators. He described the course of the voyage from Lisbon to the East, the currents, the trade-winds and monsoons, the harbours, the islands, the shoals, the sunken rocks and dangerous quicksands, and he accompanied his work with various maps and charts, both general and special, of land and water, rarely delineated before his day, as well as by various astronomical and mathematical calculations. Already a countryman of his own, Wagenaar of Zeeland, had laid the mariners of the world under special obligation by a manual which came into such universal use that for centuries afterwards the sailors of England and of other countries called their indispensable vade-mecum a Wagenaar. But in that text-book but little information was afforded to eastern voyagers, because, before the enterprise of Linschoten, little was known of the Orient except to the Portuguese and Spaniards, by whom nothing was communicated.

The work of Linschoten was a source of wealth, both from the scientific treasures which it diffused among an active and intelligent people, and the impulse which it gave to that direct trade between the Netherlands and the East which had been so long deferred, and which now came to relieve the commerce of the republic, and therefore the republic itself, from the danger of positive annihilation.

It is not necessary for my purpose to describe in detail the series of voyages by way of the Cape of Good Hope which, beginning with the adventures of the brothers Houtmann at this period, and with the circumnavigation of the world by Olivier van Noord, made the Dutch for a long time the leading Christian nation in those golden regions, and which carried the United Netherlands to the highest point of prosperity and power. The Spanish monopoly of the Indian and the Pacific Ocean was effectually disposed of, but the road was not a new road, nor did any striking discoveries at this

immediate epoch illustrate the enterprise of Holland in the East. In the age just opening the homely names most dear to the young republic were to be inscribed on capes, islands, and promontories, seas, bays, and continents. There was soon to be a "Staten Island" both in the frozen circles of the northern and of the southern pole, as well as in that favoured region where now the mighty current of a world-wide commerce flows through the gates of that great metropolis of the western world, once called New Amsterdam. Those well-beloved words, Orange and Nassau, Maurice and William, intermingled with the names of many an ancient town and village, or with the simple patronymics of hardy navigators or honoured statesmen, were to make the vernacular of the new commonwealth a familiar sound in the remotest corners of the earth; while a fifth continent, discovered by the enterprise of Hollanders, was soon to be fitly baptized with the name of the fatherland. Posterity has been neither just nor grateful, and those early names which Dutch genius and enterprise wrote upon so many prominent points of the earth's surface, then seen for the first time by European eyes, are no longer known.

The impulse given to the foreign trade of the Netherlands by the publication of Linschoten's work was destined to be a lasting one. Meantime this most indefatigable and enterprising voyager—one of those men who had done nothing in his own estimation so long as aught remained to do—was deeply pondering the possibility of a shorter road to the opulent kingdoms of Cathay and of China than the one which the genius of De Gama had opened to his sovereigns. Geography as a science was manifesting the highest activity at that period, but was still in a rudimentary state. To the Hollanders especially much of the progress already made by it was owing. The maps of the world by Mercator of Leyden, published on a large scale, together with many astronomical and geographical charts, delineations of exploration, and other scientific works, at the magnificent printing establishment of William Blaeuw, in Amsterdam, the friend and pupil

of Tycho Brahe, and the first in that line of typographers who made the name famous, constituted an epoch in cosmography. Another ardent student of geography lived in Amsterdam, Peter Plancius by name, a Calvinist preacher, and one of the most zealous and intolerant of his cloth. In an age and a country which had not yet thoroughly learned the lesson taught by hundreds of thousands of murders committed by an orthodox church, he was one of those who considered the substitution of a new dogma and a new hierarchy, a new orthodoxy and a new church, in place of the old ones, a satisfactory result for fifty years of perpetual bloodshed. Nether Torquemada nor Peter Titelmann could have more thoroughly abhorred a Jew or a Calvinist than Peter Plancius detested a Lutheran, or any other of the unclean tribe of remonstrants. That the intolerance of himself and his comrades was confined to fiery words, and was not manifested in the actual burning alive of the heterodox, was a mark of the advance made by the mass of mankind in despite of bigotry. It was at any rate a solace to those who believed in human progress, even in matters of conscience, that no other ecclesiastical establishment was ever likely to imitate the matchless machinery for the extermination of heretical vermin which the Church of Rome had found in the Spanish Inquisition. The blasts of denunciation from the pulpit of Plancius have long since mingled with empty air and been forgotten, but his services in the cause of nautical enterprise and geographical science, which formed, as it were, a relaxation to what he deemed the more serious pursuits of theology, will endear his name for ever to the lovers of civilization.

Plancius and Dr. Francis Maalzoon—the enlightened pensionary of Enkhuizen—had studied long and earnestly the history and aspects of the oceanic trade, which had been unfolding itself then for a whole century, but was still comparatively new, while Barneveld, ever ready to assist in the advancement of science, and to foster that commerce which was the life of the commonwealth, was most favourably

disposed towards projects of maritime exploration. For hitherto, although the Hollanders had been among the hardiest and the foremost in the art of navigation, they had contributed but little to actual discovery. A Genoese had led the way to America, while one Portuguese mariner had been the first to double the southern cape of Africa, and another, at the opposite side of the world, had opened what was then supposed the only passage through the vast continent which, according to ideas then prevalent, extended from the Southern Pole to Greenland, and from Java to Patagonia. But it was easier to follow in the wake of Columbus, Gama, or Magellan, than to strike out new pathways by the aid of scientific deduction and audacious enterprise. At a not distant day many errors, disseminated by the boldest of Portuguese navigators, were to be corrected by the splendid discoveries of sailors sent forth by the Dutch republic, and a rich harvest in consequence was to be reaped both by science and commerce. It is true, too, that the Netherlanders claimed to have led the way to the great voyages of Columbus by their discovery of the Azores. Joshua van den Berg, a merchant of Bruges, it was vigorously maintained, had landed in that archipelago in the year 1445. He had found there, however, no vestiges of the human race, save that upon the principal island, in the midst of the solitude, was seen—so ran the tale—a colossal statue of a man on horseback, wrapped in a cloak, holding the reins of his steed in his left hand, and solemnly extending his right arm to the west. This gigantic and solitary apparition on a rock in the ocean was supposed to indicate the existence of a new world, and the direction in which it was to be sought, but it is probable that the shipwrecked Fleming was quite innocent of any such magnificent visions. The original designation of the Flemish Islands, derived from their first colonization by Netherlanders, was changed to Azores by Portuguese mariners, amazed at the myriads of hawks which they found there. But if the Netherlanders had never been able to make higher claims as discoverers than the accidental and dubious landing upon an

unknown shore of a tempest-tost mariner, their position in the records of geographical exploration would not be so eminent as it certainly is.

Meantime the eyes of Linschoten, Plancius, Maalzoon, Barneveld, and of many other ardent philosophers and patriots, were turned anxiously towards the regions of the North Pole. Two centuries later—and still more recently in our own day and generation—what heart has not thrilled with sympathy and with pride at the story of the magnificent exploits, the heroism, the contempt of danger and of suffering which have characterized the great navigators whose names are so familiar to the world; especially the arctic explorers of England and of our own country? The true chivalry of an advanced epoch—recognizing that there can be no sublimer vocation for men of action than to extend the boundary of human knowledge in the face of perils and obstacles more formidable and more mysterious than those encountered by the knights of old in the cause of the Lord's sepulchre or the holy grail—they have thus embodied in a form which will ever awaken enthusiasm in imaginative natures, the noble impulses of our latter civilization. To win the favour of that noblest of mistresses, Science; to take authoritative possession, in her name, of the whole domain of humanity; to open new pathways to commerce; to elevate and enlarge the human intellect, and to multiply indefinitely the sum of human enjoyments; to bring the inhabitants of the earth into closer and more friendly communication, so that, after some yet unimagined inventions and discoveries, and after the lapse of many years, which in the sight of the Omnipotent are but as one day, the human race may form one pacific family, instead of being broken up, as are the most enlightened of peoples now, into warring tribes of internecine savages, prating of the advancement of civilization while coveting each other's possessions, intriguing against each other's interests, and thoroughly in earnest when cutting each other's throats; this is truly to be the pioneers of a possible civilization, compared to which our present culture

may seem but a poor barbarism. If the triumphs and joys of the battle-field have been esteemed among the noblest themes for poet, painter, or chronicler, alike in the mists of antiquity and in the full glare of later days, surely a still more encouraging spectacle for those who believe in the world's progress is the exhibition of almost infinite valour, skill, and endurance in the cause of science and humanity.

It was believed by the Dutch cosmographers that some ten thousand miles of voyaging might be saved, could the passage to what was then called the kingdoms of Cathay be effected by way of the north. It must be remembered that there were no maps of the unknown regions lying beyond the northern headlands of Sweden. Delineations of continents, islands, straits, rivers, and seas, over which every modern schoolboy pores, were not attempted even by the hand of fancy. It was perhaps easier at the end of the sixteenth century than it is now, to admit the possibility of a practical path to China and India across the pole; for delusions as to climate and geographical configuration then prevalent have long since been dispelled. While, therefore, at least as much heroism was required then as now to launch into those unknown seas, in hope to solve the dread mystery of the North, there was even a firmer hope than can ever be cherished again of deriving an immediate and tangible benefit from the enterprise. Plancius and Maalzoon, the States-General and Prince Maurice, were convinced that the true road to Cathay would be found by sailing north-east. Linschoten, the man who knew India and the beaten paths to India better than any other living Christian, was so firmly convinced of the truth of this theory, that he volunteered to take the lead in the first expedition. Many were the fantastic dreams in which even the wisest thinkers of the age indulged as to the polar regions. Four straits or channels, pierced by a magic hand, led, it was thought, from the interior of Muscovy towards the arctic seas. According to some speculators, however, those seas enclosed a polar continent where perpetual summer and unbroken daylight reigned, and

whose inhabitants, having obtained a high degree of culture, lived in the practice of every virtue and in the enjoyment of every blessing. Others peopled these mysterious regions with horrible savages, having hoofs of horses and heads of dogs, and with no clothing save their own long ears coiled closely around their limbs and bodies; while it was deemed almost certain that a race of headless men, with eyes in their breasts, were the most enlightened among those distant tribes. Instead of constant sunshine, it was believed by such theorists that the wretched inhabitants of that accursed zone were immersed in almost incessant fogs or tempests, that the whole population died every winter and were only recalled to temporary existence by the advent of a tardy and evanescent spring. No doubt was felt that the voyager in those latitudes would have to encounter volcanoes of fire and mountains of ice, together with land and sea monsters more ferocious than the eye of man had ever beheld; but it was universally admitted that an opening, either by strait or sea, into the desired Indian haven would reveal itself at last.

The instruments of navigation too were but rude and defective compared to the beautiful machinery with which modern art and science now assist their votaries along the dangerous path of discovery. The small yet unwieldy, awkward, and, to the modern mind, most grotesque vessels in which such audacious deeds were performed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries awaken perpetual astonishment. A ship of a hundred tons burden, built up like a tower, both at stem and stern, and presenting in its broad bulbous prow, its width of beam in proportion to its length, its depression amidships, and in other sins against symmetry, as much opposition to progress over the waves as could well be imagined, was the vehicle in which those indomitable Dutchmen circumnavigated the globe and confronted the arctic terrors of either pole. An astrolabe—such as Martin Beheim had invented for the Portuguese, a clumsy astronomical ring of three feet in circumference—was still the chief machine used for ascertaining the latitude, and on shipboard a most de-

fective one. There were no logarithms, no means of determining at sea the variations of the magnetic needle, no system of dead reckoning by throwing the log and chronicling the courses traversed. The firearms with which the sailors were to do battle with the unknown enemies that might beset their path were rude and clumsy to handle. The art of compressing and condensing provisions was unknown. They had no tea nor coffee to refresh the nervous system in its terrible trials; but there was one deficiency which perhaps supplied the place of many positive luxuries. Those Hollanders drank no ardent spirits. They had beer and wine in reasonable quantities, but no mention is ever made in the journals of their famous voyages of any more potent liquor; and to this circumstance doubtless the absence of mutinous or disorderly demonstrations, under the most trying circumstances, may in a great degree be attributed.

Thus, these navigators were but slenderly provided with the appliances with which hazardous voyages have been smoothed by modern art; but they had iron hearts, faith in themselves, in their commanders, in their republic, and in the Omnipotent; perfect discipline and unbroken cheerfulness amid toil, suffering, and danger. No chapter of history utters a more beautiful homily on devotion to duty as the true guiding principle of human conduct than the artless narratives which have been preserved of many of these maritime enterprises. It is for these noble lessons that they deserve to be kept in perpetual memory.

And in no individual of that day were those excellent qualities more thoroughly embodied than in William Barendz, pilot and burgher of Amsterdam. It was partly under his charge that the first little expedition set forth on the 5th of June, 1594, towards those unknown arctic seas, which no keel from Christendom had ever ploughed, and to those fabulous regions where the foot of civilized men had never trod. Maalzoon, Plancius, and Balthaser Moucheron, merchant of Middelburg, were the chief directors of the enterprise; but there was a difference of opinion between them.

The pensionary was firm in the faith that the true path to China would be found by steering through the passage which was known to exist between the land of Nova Zembla and the northern coasts of Muscovy, inhabited by the savage tribes called Samoyedes. It was believed that, after passing those straits, the shores of the great continent would be found to trend in a south-easterly direction, and that along that coast it would accordingly be easy to make the desired voyage to the eastern ports of China. Plancius, on the contrary, indicated as the most promising passage the outside course, between the northern coast of Nova Zembla and the pole. Three ships and a fishing yacht were provided by the cities of Enkhuizen, Amsterdam, and by the province of Zeeland respectively. Linschoten was principal commissioner on board the Enkhuizen vessel, having with him an experienced mariner, Brandt Ijsbrantz by name, as skipper. Barendz, with the Amsterdam ship and the yacht, soon parted company with the others, and steered, according to the counsels of Plancius and his own convictions, for the open seas of the north. And in that memorable summer, for the first time in the world's history, the whole desolate region of Nova Zembla was visited, investigated, and thoroughly mapped out. Barendz sailed as far as latitude 77°, and to the extreme north-eastern point of the island. In a tremendous storm off a cape, which he ironically christened Consolation-hook (Troost-hoek), his ship, drifting under bare poles amid ice and mist and tempest, was nearly dashed to pieces; but he reached at last the cluster of barren islets beyond the utmost verge of Nova Zembla, to which he hastened to affix the cherished appellation of Orange. This, however, was the limit of his voyage. His ship was ill-provisioned, and the weather had been severe beyond expectation. He turned back on the 1st of August, resolving to repeat his experiment early in the following year.

Meantime Linschoten, with the ships Swan and Mercury, had entered the passage which they called the Straits of Nassau, but which are now known to all the world as the Wai-

gats. They were informed by the Samoyedes of the coast that, after penetrating the narrow channel, they would find themselves in a broad and open sea. Subsequent discoveries showed the correctness of the statement, but it was not permitted to the adventurers on this occasion to proceed so far. The strait was already filled with ice-drift, and their vessels were brought to a standstill, after about a hundred and fifty English miles of progress beyond the Waigats; for the whole sea of Tartary, converted into a mass of ice-mountains and islands, and lashed into violent agitation by a north-easterly storm, seemed driving down upon the doomed voyagers. It was obvious that the sunny clime of Cathay was not thus to be reached, at least upon that occasion. With difficulty they succeeded in extricating themselves from the dangers surrounding them, and emerged at last from the Waigats.

On the 15th of August, in latitude 69° 15′, they met the ship of Barendz and returned in company to Holland, reaching Amsterdam on the 16th of September. Barendz had found the seas and coasts visited by him destitute of human inhabitants, but swarming with polar bears, with seals, with a terrible kind of monsters, then seen for the first time, as large as oxen, with almost human faces and with two long tusks protruding from each grim and grotesque visage. These mighty beasts, subsequently known as walrusses or sea-horses, were found sometimes in swarms of two hundred at a time, basking in the arctic sun, and seemed equally at home on land, in the sea, and on icebergs. When aware of the approach of their human visitors, they would slide off an ice-block into the water, holding their cubs in their arms, and ducking up and down in the sea as if in sport. Then tossing the young ones away, they would rush upon the boats and endeavour to sink the strangers, whom they instinctively recognised as their natural enemies. Many were the severe combats recorded by the diarist of that voyage of Barendz with the walrusses and the bears.

The chief result of this first expedition was the geogra-

phical investigation made, and, with unquestionable right, these earliest arctic pilgrims bestowed the names of their choice upon the regions first visited by themselves. According to the unfailing and universal impulse on such occasions, the names dear to the fatherland were naturally selected. The straits were called Nassau, the island at its mouth became States or Staten Island ; the northern coasts of Tartary received the familiar appellations of New Holland, New Friesland, New Walcheren ; while the two rivers, beyond which Linschoten did not advance, were designated Swan and Mercury respectively, after his two ships. Barendz, on his part, had duly baptized every creek, bay, islet, and headland of Nova Zembla, and assuredly Christian mariner had never taken the latitude of 77° before. Yet the antiquary, who compares the maps soon afterwards published by William Blaeuw with the charts now in familiar use, will observe with indignation the injustice with which the early geographical records have been defaced, and the names rightfully bestowed upon those terrible deserts by their earliest discoverers rudely torn away. The islands of Orange can still be recognized, and this is almost the only vestige left of the whole nomenclature. But where are Cape Nassau, William's Island, Admiralty Island, Cape Plancius, Black-hook, Cross-hook, Bear's-hook, Ice-hook, Consolation-hook, Cape Desire, the Straits of Nassau, Maurice Island, Staten Island, Enkhuizen Island, and many other similar appellations ?

The sanguine Linschoten, on his return, gave so glowing an account of the expedition that Prince Maurice and Olden-Barneveld, and prominent members of the States-General, were infected with his enthusiasm. He considered the north-east passage to China discovered and the problem solved. It would only be necessary to fit out another expedition on a larger scale the next year, provide it with a cargo of merchandize suitable for the China market, and initiate the direct polar-oriental trade without further delay. It seems amazing that so incomplete an attempt to overcome such formidable obstacles should have been considered a decided

success. Yet there is no doubt of the genuineness of the conviction by which Linschoten was actuated. The calmer Barendz, and his friend and comrade Gerrit de Veer, were of opinion that the philosopher had made "rather a free representation" of the enterprise of 1594 and of the prospects for the future.

Nevertheless, the general Government, acting on Linschoten's suggestion, furnished a fleet of seven ships: two from Enkhuizen, two from Zeeland, two from Amsterdam, and a yacht which was to be despatched homeward with the news, so soon as the expedition should have passed through the straits of Nassau, forced its way through the frozen gulf of Tartary, doubled Cape Tabin, and turned southward on its direct course to China. The sublime credulity which accepted Linschoten's hasty solution of the polar enigma as conclusive was fairly matched by the sedateness with which the authorities made the preparations for the new voyage. So deliberately were the broadcloths, linens, tapestries, and other assorted articles for this first great speculation to Cathay, *viâ* the North Pole, stowed on board the fleet, that nearly half the summer had passed before anchor was weighed in the Meuse. The pompous expedition was thus predestined to an almost ridiculous failure. Yet it was in the hands of great men, both on shore and sea. Maurice, Barneveld, and Maalzoon had personally interested themselves in the details of its outfitting, Linschoten sailed as chief commissioner, the calm and intrepid Barendz was upper pilot of the whole fleet, and a man who was afterwards destined to achieve an immortal name in the naval history of his country, Jacob Heemskerk, was supercargo of the Amsterdam ship. In obedience to the plans of Linschoten and of Maalzoon, the passage by way of the Waigats was of course attempted. A landing was effected on the coast of Tartary. Whatever geographical information could be obtained from such a source was imparted by the wandering Samoyedes. On the 2nd of September a party went ashore on Staten Island and occupied themselves in gathering some glistening pebbles which the journalist of the

expedition describes with much gravity as a "kind of diamonds, very plentiful upon the island." While two of the men were thus especially engaged in a deep hollow, one of them found himself suddenly twitched from behind. "What are you pulling at me for, mate?" he said impatiently to his comrade as he supposed. But his companion was a large, long, lean white bear, and in another instant the head of the unfortunate diamond-gatherer was off and the bear was sucking his blood. The other man escaped to his friends, and together a party of twenty charged upon the beast. Another of the combatants was killed and half devoured by the hungry monster before a fortunate bullet struck him in the head. But even then the bear maintained his grip upon his two victims, and it was not until his brains were fairly beaten out with the butt end of a snaphance by the boldest of the party that they were enabled to secure the bodies of their comrades and give them a hurried kind of Christian burial. They flayed the bear and took away his hide with them, and this, together with an ample supply of the diamonds of Staten Island, was the only merchandize obtained upon the voyage for which such magnificent preparations had been made. For, by the middle of September, it had become obviously hopeless to attempt the passage of the frozen sea that season, and the expedition returned, having accomplished nothing. It reached Amsterdam upon the 18th of November, 1595.

The authorities, intensely disappointed at this almost ridiculous result, refused to furnish direct assistance to any farther attempts at arctic explorations. The States-General however offered a reward of twenty-five thousand florins to any navigators who might succeed in discovering the northern passage, with a proportionate sum to those whose efforts in that direction might be deemed commendable, even if not crowned with success.

Stimulated by the spirit of adventure and the love of science far more than by the hope of gaining a pecuniary prize, the undaunted Barendz, who was firm in the faith that a pathway existed by the north of Nova Zembla and across

the pole to farthest Ind, determined to renew the attempt the following summer. The city of Amsterdam accordingly, early in the year 1596, fitted out two ships. Select crews of entirely unmarried men volunteered for the enterprise. John Cornelisz van der Ryp, an experienced sea-captain, was placed in charge of one of the vessels, William Barendz was upper pilot of the other, and Heemskerk, "the man who ever steered his way through ice or iron,"[1] was skipper and supercargo. 1596.

The ships sailed from the Vlie on the 18th May. The opinions of Peter Plancius prevailed in this expedition at last; the main object of both Ryp and Barendz being to avoid the fatal, narrow, ice-clogged Waigats. Although identical in this determination, their views as to the configuration of the land and sea, and as to the proper course to be steered, were conflicting. They however sailed in company mainly in a N.E. by N. direction, although Barendz would have steered much more to the east.

On the 5th June the watch on deck saw, as they supposed, immense flocks of white swans swimming towards the ships, and covering the sea as far as the eye could reach. All hands came up to look at the amazing spectacle, but the more experienced soon perceived that the myriads of swans were simply infinite fields of ice, through which however they were able to steer their course without much impediment, getting into clear sea beyond about midnight, at which hour the sun was one degree above the horizon.

Proceeding northwards two days more they were again surrounded by ice, and, finding the "water green as grass," they believed themselves to be near Greenland." On the 9th June they discovered an island in latitude, according to their observation, 74° 30′, which seemed about five miles long. In this neighbourhood they remained four days, having on one occasion a "great fight which lasted four glasses" with a polar bear, and making a desperate attempt to capture him in order to bring him as a show to Holland. The effort not

[1] Inscription on his tombstone.

being successful, they were obliged to take his life to save their own; but in what manner they intended, had they secured him alive, to provide for such a passenger in the long voyage across the North Pole to China, and thence back to Amsterdam, did not appear. The attempt illustrated the calmness, however, of those hardy navigators. They left the island on the 13th June, having baptised it Bear Island in memory of their vanquished foe, a name which was subsequently exchanged for the insipid appellation of Cherry Island, in honour of a comfortable London merchant who seven years afterwards sent a ship to those arctic regions.

Six days later they saw land again, took the sun, and found their latitude 80° 11′. Certainly no men had ever been within less than ten degrees of the pole before. On the longest day of the year they landed on this newly discovered country, which they at first fancied to be a part of Greenland. They found its surface covered with eternal snow, broken into mighty glaciers, jagged with precipitous ice-peaks; and to this land of almost perpetual winter, where the mercury freezes during ten months in the year, and where the sun remains four months beneath the horizon, they subsequently gave the appropriate and vernacular name of Spitzbergen. Combats with the sole denizens of these hideous abodes, the polar bears, on the floating ice, on the water, or on land, were constantly occurring, and were the only events to disturb the monotony of that perpetual icy sunshine, where no night came to relieve the almost maddening glare. They rowed up a wide inlet on the western coast, and came upon great numbers of wild-geese sitting on their eggs. They proved to be the same geese that were in the habit of visiting Holland in vast flocks every summer, and it had never before been discovered where they laid and hatched their eggs. "Therefore," says the diarist of the expedition, "some voyagers have not scrupled to state that the eggs grow on trees in Scotland, and that such of the fruits of those trees as fall into the water become goslings, while those which drop on the ground burst in pieces and come to nothing.

21 June, 1596.

We now see that quite the contrary is the case," continues De Veer, with perfect seriousness, "nor is it to be wondered at, for nobody has ever been until now where those birds lay their eggs. No man, so far as known, ever reached the latitude of eighty degrees before. This land was hitherto unknown."

The scientific results of this ever-memorable voyage might be deemed sufficiently meagre were the fact that the eggs of wild geese did not grow on trees its only recorded discovery. But the investigations made into the dread mysteries of the north, and the actual problems solved, were many, while the simplicity of the narrator marks the infantine character of the epoch in regard to natural history. When so illustrious a mind as Grotius was inclined to believe in a race of arctic men whose heads grew beneath their shoulders, the ingenuous mariner of Amsterdam may be forgiven for his earnestness in combating the popular theory concerning goslings.

On the 23rd June they went ashore again, and occupied themselves, as well as the constant attacks of the bears would permit, in observing the variation of the needle, which they ascertained to be sixteen degrees. On the same day, the ice closing around in almost infinite masses, they made haste to extricate themselves from the land and bore southwards again, making Bear Island once more on the 1st July. Here Cornelius Ryp parted company with Heemskerk and Barendz, having announced his intention to sail northward again beyond latitude 80° in search of the coveted passage. Barendz, retaining his opinion that the true inlet to the circumpolar sea, if it existed, would be found N.E. of Nova Zembla, steered in that direction. On the 13th July they found themselves by observation in latitude 73°, and considered themselves in the neighbourhood of Sir Hugh Willoughby's land. Four days later they were in Lomms' Bay, a harbour of Nova Zembla, so called by them from the multitude of lomms frequenting it, a bird to which they gave the whimsical name of arctic parrots. On the 20th July the ice obstructed their voyage, covering the sea in all directions with floating mountains and valleys,

so that they came to an anchor off an islet where on a former voyage the Hollanders had erected the precious emblem of Christian faith, and baptised the dreary solitude Cross Island. But these pilgrims, as they now approached the spot, found no worshippers there, while, as if in horrible mockery of their piety, two enormous white bears had reared themselves in an erect posture, in order the better to survey their visitors, directly at the foot of the cross. The party which had just landed were unarmed, and were for making off as fast as possible to their boats. But Skipper Heemskerk, feeling that this would be death to all of them, said simply, "The first man that runs shall have this boat-hook of mine in his hide. Let us remain together and face them off." It was done. The party moved slowly towards their boats, Heemskerk bringing up the rear, and fairly staring the polar monsters out of countenance, who remained grimly regarding them, and ramping about the cross.

The sailors got into their boat with much deliberation, and escaped to the ship, "glad enough," said De Veer, "that they were alive to tell the story, and that they had got out of the cat-dance so fortunately."

21 July. Next day they took the sun, and found their latitude 76° 15′, and the variation of the needle twenty-six degrees.

For seventeen days more they were tossing about in mist and raging snow-storms, and amidst tremendous icebergs, some of them rising in steeples and pinnacles to a hundred feet above the sea, some grounded and stationary, others drifting fearfully around in all directions, threatening to crush them at any moment, or to close in about them and imprison them for ever. They made fast by their bower

7 August. anchor on the evening of 7th August to a vast iceberg which was aground, but just as they had eaten their supper there was a horrible groaning, bursting, and shrieking all around them, an indefinite succession of awful sounds which made their hair stand on end, and then the iceberg split beneath the water into more than four hundred

pieces with a crash "such as no words could describe." They escaped any serious damage, and made their way to a vast steepled and towered block like a floating cathedral, where they again came to anchor.

On the 15th August they reached the isles of Orange, on the extreme north-eastern verge of Nova Zembla. Here a party going ashore climbed to the top of a rising ground, and to their infinite delight beheld an open sea entirely free from ice, stretching to the S. E. and E.S.E. as far as eye could reach. At last the game was won, the passage to Cathay was discovered. Full of joy, they pulled back in their boat to the ship, "not knowing how to get there quick enough to tell William Barendz." Alas! they were not aware of the action of that mighty ocean river, the Gulf-stream, which was sweeping around those regions with its warm dissolving current.

Three days later they returned baffled in their sanguine efforts to sail through the open sea. The ice had returned upon them, setting southwardly in obedience to the same impulse which for a moment had driven it away, and they found themselves imprisoned again near the "Hook of Desire." 18 August.

On the 25th August they had given up all the high hopes by which they had been so lately inspired, and, as the stream was again driving the ice from the land, they trusted to sail southward and westward back towards the Waigats. Having passed by Nova Zembla, and found no opening into the seas beyond, they were disposed in the rapidly waning summer to effect their retreat by the south side of the island, and so through the Straits of Nassau home. In vain. The catastrophe was upon them. As they struggled slowly past the "Ice-haven," the floating mountains and glaciers, impelled by the mighty current, once more gathered around and forced them back to that horrible harbour. During the remaining days of August the ship struggled, almost like a living creature, with the perils that beset her; now rearing in the air, her bows propped upon mighty blocks, 25 August.

till she absolutely sat erect upon her stern, now lying prostrate on her side, and anon righting again as the ice-masses would for a moment float away and leave her breathing space and room to move in. A blinding snow-storm was raging the while, the ice was cracking and groaning in all directions, and the ship was shrieking, so that the medley of awful sights and sounds was beyond the power of language. "'Twas enough to make the hair stand on end," said Gerrit de Veer, "to witness the hideous spectacle."

But the agony was soon over. By the 1st September the
1 Sept. 1596. ship was hard and fast. The ice was as immoveable as the dry land, and she would not move again that year even if she ever floated. Those pilgrims from the little republic were to spend the winter in their arctic harbour. Resigning themselves without a murmur to their inevitable fate, they set about their arrangements with perfect good humour and discipline. Most fortunately a great quantity of drift wood, masses of timber, and great trees torn away with their roots from distant shores, lay strewn along the coast, swept thither by the wandering currents. At once they resolved to build a house in which they might shelter themselves from the wild beasts, and from their still more cruel enemy, the cold. So thanking God for the providential and unexpected supply of building material and fuel, they lost no time in making sheds, in hauling timber, and in dragging supplies from the ship before the dayless winter should descend upon them.

Six weeks of steady cheerful labour succeeded. Tremen-
1 Sept. to 12 Oct. dous snow-storms, accompanied by hurricanes of wind, often filled the atmosphere to suffocation, so that no human being could move a ship's length without perishing; while, did any of their number venture forth, as the tempest subsided, it was often to find himself almost in the arms of a polar bear before the dangerous snow-white form could be distinguished moving sluggishly through the white chaos.

For those hungry companions never left them so long as

the sun remained above the horizon, swarming like insects and birds in tropical lands. When the sailors put their meat-tubs for a moment out upon the ice a bear's intrusive muzzle would forthwith be inserted to inspect the contents. Maddened by hunger, and their keen scent excited by the salted provisions, and by the living flesh and blood of these intruders upon their ancient solitary domains, they would often attempt to effect their entrance into the ship.

On one such occasion, when Heemskerk and two companions were the whole garrison, the rest being at a distance sledding wood, the future hero of Gibraltar was near furnishing a meal to his Nova Zembla enemies. It was only by tossing sticks and stones and marling-spikes across the ice, which the bears would instantly turn and pursue, like dogs at play with children, that the assault could be diverted until a fortunate shot was made.

Several were thus killed in the course of the winter, and one in particular was disembowelled and set frozen upon his legs near their house, where he remained month after month with a mass of snow and ice accumulated upon him, until he had grown into a fantastic and gigantic apparition, still wearing the semblance of their mortal foe.

By the beginning of October the weather became so intensely cold that it was almost impossible to work. The carpenter died before the house was half completed. To dig a grave was impossible, but they laid him in a cleft of the ice, and he was soon covered with the snow Meantime the sixteen that were left went on as they best might with their task, and on October 2nd they had a house-raising. The frame-work was set up, and in order to comply with the national usage in such cases, they planted, instead of the May-pole with its fluttering streamers, a gigantic icicle before their new residence. Ten days later they moved into the house and slept there for the first time, while a bear, profiting by their absence, passed the night in the deserted ship. 12 Oct.

On the 4th November the sun rose no more, but the moon

at first shone day and night, until they were once in great perplexity to know whether it were midday or midnight. It proved to be exactly noon. The bears disappeared with the sun, but white foxes swarmed in their stead, and all day and night were heard scrambling over their roof. These were caught daily in traps and furnished them food, besides furs for raiment. The cold became appalling, and they looked in each other's faces sometimes in speechless amazement. It was obvious that the extreme limit of human endurance had been reached. Their clothes were frozen stiff. Their shoes were like iron, so that they were obliged to array themselves from head to foot in the skins of the wild foxes. The clocks stopped. The beer became solid. The Spanish wine froze and had to be melted in saucepans. The smoke in the house blinded them. Fire did not warm them, and their garments were often in a blaze while their bodies were half frozen. All through the month of December an almost perpetual snow-deluge fell from the clouds. For days together they were unable to emerge, and it was then only by most vigorous labour that they could succeed in digging a passage out of their buried house. On the night of the 7th December sudden death had nearly put an end to the sufferings of the whole party. Having brought a quantity of seacoal from the ship, they had made a great fire, and after the smoke was exhausted, they had stopped up the chimney and every crevice of the house. Each man then turned into his bunk for the night, "all rejoicing much in the warmth and prattling a long time with each other." At last an unaccustomed giddiness and faintness came over them, of which they could not guess the cause, but fortunately one of the party had the instinct, before he lost consciousness, to open the chimney, while another forced open the door and fell in a swoon upon the snow. Their dread enemy thus came to their relief, and saved their lives.

As the year drew to a close, the frost and the perpetual snow-tempest became, if that were possible, still more frightful. Their Christmas was not a merry one, and for the first

few days of the new year, it was impossible for them to move from the house. On the 25th January, the snow-storms having somewhat abated, they once more dug themselves as it were out of their living grave, and spent the whole day in hauling wood from the shore. As their hour-glasses informed them that night was approaching, they bethought themselves that it was Twelfth Night, or Three Kings' Eve. So they all respectfully proposed to Skipper Heemskerk, that, in the midst of their sorrow they might for once have a little diversion. A twelfth-night feast was forthwith ordained. A scanty portion of the wine yet remaining to them was produced. Two pounds weight of flour, which they had brought to make paste with for cartridges, was baked into pancakes with a little oil, and a single hard biscuit was served out to each man to be sopped in his meagre allowance of wine. "We were as happy," said Gerrit de Veer, with simple pathos, "as if we were having a splendid banquet at home. We imagined ourselves in the fatherland with all our friends, so much did we enjoy our repast."

That nothing might be omitted, lots were drawn for king, and the choice fell on the gunner, who was forthwith proclaimed monarch of Nova Zembla. Certainly no men could have exhibited more undaunted cheerfulness amid bears and foxes, icebergs and cold—such as Christians had never conceived of before—than did these early arctic pilgrims. Nor did Barendz neglect any opportunity of studying the heavens. A meridian was drawn near the house, on which the compass was placed, and observations of various stars were constantly made, despite the cold, with extraordinary minuteness. The latitude, from concurrent measurement of the Giant, the Bull, Orion, Aldebaran, and other constellations—in the absence of the sun—was ascertained to be a little above seventy-six degrees, and the variations of the needle were accurately noted.

On the 24th January it was clear weather and comparatively mild, so that Heemskerk, with De Veer and another, walked to the strand. To their infinite delight and surprise

they again saw the disk of the sun on the edge of the horizon, and they all hastened back with the glad tidings. But Barendz shook his head. Many days must elapse, he said, before the declination of the sun should be once more 14°, at which point in the latitude of 76° they had lost sight of the luminary on the 4th November, and at which only it could again be visible. This, according to his calculations, would be on the 10th February. Two days of mirky and stormy atmosphere succeeded, and those who had wagered in support of the opinion of Barendz were inclined to triumph over those who believed in the observation of Heemskerk. On the 27th January there was, however, no mistake. The sky was bright, and the whole disk of the sun was most distinctly seen by all, although none were able to explain the phenomenon, and Barendz least of all. They had kept accurate diaries ever since their imprisonment, and although the clocks sometimes had stopped, the hour-glasses had regularly noted the lapse of time. Moreover, Barendz knew from the Ephemerides for 1589 to 1600, published by Dr. Joseph Scala in Venice, a copy of which work he had brought with him, that on the 24th January, 1597, the moon would be seen at one o'clock A.M. at Venice, in conjunction with Jupiter. He accordingly took as good an observation as could be done with the naked eye and found that conjunction at six o'clock A.M. of the same day, the two bodies appearing in the same vertical line in the sign of Taurus. The date was thus satisfactorily established, and a calculation of the longitude of the house was deduced with an accuracy which in those circumstances was certainly commendable. Nevertheless, as the facts and the theory of refraction were not thoroughly understood, nor Tycho Brahe's tables of refraction generally known, pilot Barendz could not be expected to be wiser than his generation.

The startling discovery that in the latitude of 76° the sun re-appeared on the 24th January, instead of the 10th February, was destined to awaken commotion throughout the whole

scientific world, and has perhaps hardly yet been completely explained.

But the daylight brought no mitigation of their sufferings. The merciless cold continued without abatement, and the sun seemed to mock their misery. The foxes disappeared, and the ice-bears in their stead swarmed around the house, and clambered at night over the roof. Again they constantly fought with them for their lives. Daily the grave question was renewed whether the men should feed on the bears or the bears on the men. On one occasion their dead enemy proved more dangerous to them than in life, for three of their number, who had fed on bear's liver, were nearly poisoned to death. Had they perished, none of the whole party would have ever left Nova Zembla. "It seemed," said the diarist, "that the beasts had smelt out that we meant to go away, and had just begun to have a taste for us."

And thus the days wore on. The hour-glass and the almanac told them that winter had given place to spring, but nature still lay in cold obstruction. One of their number, who had long been ill, died. They hollowed a grave for him in the frozen snow, performing a rude burial service, and singing a psalm; but the cold had nearly made them all corpses before the ceremony was done.

At last, on the 17th April, some of them climbing over the icebergs to the shore found much open sea. They also saw a small bird diving in the water, and looked upon it as a halcyon and harbinger of better fortunes. The open weather continuing, they began to hanker for the fatherland. So they brought the matter, "not mutinously but modestly and reasonably, before William Barendz, that he might suggest it to Heemskerk, for they were all willing to submit to his better judgment." It was determined to wait through the month of May. Should they then be obliged to abandon the ship they were to make the voyage in the two open boats, which had been carefully stowed away beneath the snow. It was soon obvious that the ship was hard and fast, and that she would never float again, except perhaps as a portion of the icebergs

in which she had so long been imbedded, when they should be swept off from the shore.

As they now set to work repairing and making ready the frail skiffs which were now their only hope, and supplying them with provisions and even with merchandize from the ship, the ravages made by the terrible winter upon the strength of the men became painfully apparent. But Heemskerk encouraged them to persevere ; "for," said he, "if the boats are not got soon under way we must be content to make our graves here as burghers of Nova Zembla."

On the 14th June they launched the boats, and "trusting themselves to God," embarked once more upon the arctic sea. Barendz, who was too ill to walk, together with Claas Anderson, also sick unto death, were dragged to the strand in sleds, and tenderly placed on board.

Barendz had, however, despite his illness, drawn up a triple record of their voyage ; one copy being fastened to the chimney of their deserted house, and one being placed in each of the boats. Their voyage was full of danger as they slowly retraced their way along the track by which they reached the memorable Ice Haven, once more doubling the Cape of Desire and heading for the Point of Consolation—landmarks on their desolate progress, whose nomenclature suggests the immortal apologue so familiar to Anglo-Saxon ears.

Off the Ice-hook, both boats came alongside each other, and Skipper Heemskerk called out to William Barendz to ask how it was with him.

16 June.

"All right, mate," replied Barendz, cheerfully ; "I hope to be on my legs again before we reach the Ward-huis." Then he begged De Veer to lift him up, that he might look upon the Ice-hook once more. The icebergs crowded around them, drifting this way and that, impelled by mighty currents and tossing on an agitated sea. There was "a hideous groaning and bursting and driving of the ice, and it seemed every moment as if the boats were to be dashed into a hundred pieces." It was plain that their voyage would now be finished for ever, were it not possible for some one of their

number to get upon the solid ice beyond and make fast a line. "But who is to bell the cat?" said Gerrit de Veer, who soon, however, volunteered himself, being the lightest of all. Leaping from one floating block to another at the imminent risk of being swept off into space, he at last reached a stationary island, and fastened his rope. Thus they warped themselves once more into the open sea.

On the 20th June William Barendz lay in the boat studying carefully the charts which they had made of the land and ocean discovered in their voyage. Tossing about in an open skiff upon a polar sea, too weak to sit upright, reduced by the unexampled sufferings of that horrible winter almost to a shadow, he still preserved his cheerfulness, and maintained that he would yet, with God's help, perform his destined task. In his next attempt he would steer north-east from the North Cape, he said, and so discover the passage. 20 June, 1597.

While he was "thus prattling," the boatswain of the other boat came on board, and said that Claas Anderson would hold out but little longer.

"Then," said William Barendz, "methinks I too shall last but a little while. Gerrit, give me to drink." When he had drunk, he turned his eyes on De Veer and suddenly breathed his last.

Great was the dismay of his companions, for they had been deceived by the dauntless energy of the man, thus holding tenaciously to his great purpose, unbaffled by danger and disappointment, even to the last instant of life. He was their chief pilot and guide, "in whom next to God they trusted."

And thus the hero, who for vivid intelligence, courage, and perseverance amid every obstacle, is fit to be classed among the noblest of maritime adventurers, had ended his career. Nor was it unmeet that the man who had led those three great although unsuccessful enterprises towards the North Pole, should be laid at last to rest—like the soldier dying in a lost battle—upon the field of his glorious labours.

Nearly six weeks longer they struggled amid tempestuous

seas. Hugging the shore, ever in danger of being dashed to atoms by the ice, pursued by their never-failing enemies the bears, and often sailing through enormous herds of walrusses, which at times gave chase to the boats, they at last reached the Schanshoek on the 28th July.

28 July.

Here they met with some Russian fishermen, who recognised Heemskerk and De Veer, having seen them on their previous voyage. Most refreshing it was to see other human faces again, after thirteen months' separation from mankind, while the honest Muscovites expressed compassion for the forlorn and emaciated condition of their former acquaintance. Furnished by them with food and wine, the Hollanders sailed in company with the Russians as far as the Waigats.

On the 18th August they made Candenoes, at the mouth of the White Sea, and doubling that cape stood boldly across the gulf for Kildin. Landing on the coast they were informed by the Laps that there were vessels from Holland at Kola.

On the 25th August one of the party, guided by a Lap, set forth on foot for that place. Four days later the guide was seen returning without their comrade; but their natural suspicion was at once disarmed as the good-humoured savage straightway produced a letter which he handed to Heemskerk.

25 Aug.

Breaking the seal, the skipper found that his correspondent expressed great surprise at the arrival of the voyagers, as he he had supposed them all to be long since dead. Therefore he was the more delighted with their coming, and promised to be with them soon, bringing with him plenty of food and drink.

The letter was signed—

"By me, JAN CORNELISZ RYP."

The occurrence was certainly dramatic, but, as one might think, sufficiently void of mystery. Yet, astonishing to relate, they all fell to pondering who this John Ryp might be who seemed so friendly and sympathetic. It was shrewdly suggested by some that it might perhaps be the sea-captain who had parted company with them off Bear Island fourteen

months before in order to sail north by way of Spitzbergen. As his christian name and surname were signed in full to the letter, the conception did not seem entirely unnatural, yet it was rejected on the ground that they had far more reasons to believe that he had perished than he for accepting their deaths as certain. One might imagine it to have been an every day occurrence for Hollanders to receive letters by a Lapland penny postman in those desolate regions. At last Heemskerk bethought himself that among his papers were several letters from their old comrade, and, on comparison, the handwriting was found the same as that of the epistle just received. This deliberate avoidance of any hasty jumping at conclusions certainly inspires confidence in the general accuracy of the adventurers, and we have the better right to believe that on the 24th January the sun's disk was really seen by them in the ice harbour—a fact long disputed by the learned world—when the careful weighing of evidence on the less important matter of Ryp's letter is taken into account.

Meantime while they were slowly admitting the identity of their friend and correspondent, honest John Cornelius Ryp himself arrived—no fantastic fly-away Hollander, but in full flesh and blood, laden with provisions, and greeting them heartily.

He had not pursued his Spitzbergen researches of the previous year, but he was now on a trading voyage in a stout vessel, and he conveyed them all by way of the Ward-huis, where he took in a cargo, back to the fatherland.

They dropped anchor in the Meuse on the 29th October, and on the 1st November arrived at Amsterdam. Here, attired in their robes and caps of white fox-skin which they had worn while citizens of Nova Zembla, they were straightway brought before the magistrates to give an account of their adventures.

They had been absent seventeen months, they had spent a whole autumn, winter, and spring—nearly ten months—under the latitude of 76° in a frozen desert, where no human beings had ever dwelt before, and they had penetrated beyond 80°

north—a farther stride towards the pole than had ever been hazarded. They had made accurate geographical, astronomical, and meteorological observations of the regions visited. They had carefully measured latitudes and longitudes and noted the variations of the magnet. They had thoroughly mapped out, described, and designated every cape, island, hook, and inlet of those undiscovered countries, and more than all, they had given a living example of courage, endurance, patience under hardship, perfect discipline, fidelity to duty, and trust in God, sufficient to inspire noble natures with emulation so long as history can read moral lessons to mankind.

No farther attempt was made to discover the north-eastern passage. The enthusiasm of Barendz had died with him, and it may be said that the stern negation by which this supreme attempt to solve the mystery of the pole was met was its best practical result. Certainly all visions of a circumpolar sea blessed with a gentle atmosphere and eternal tranquillity, and offering a smooth and easy passage for the world's commerce between Europe and Asia, had been for ever dispelled.

The memorable enterprise of Barendz and Heemskerk has been thought worthy of a minute description because it was a voyage of discovery, and because, however barren of immediate practical results it may seem to superficial eyes, it forms a great landmark in the history of human progress and the advancement of science.

Contemporaneously with these voyages towards the North Pole, the enlightened magistrates of the Netherland municipalities, aided by eminent private citizens, fitted out expeditions in the opposite direction. It was determined to measure strength with the lord of the land and seas, the great potentate against whom these republicans had been so long in rebellion, in every known region of the globe. Both from the newly discovered western world, and from the ancient abodes of oriental civilization, Spanish monopoly had long been furnishing the treasure to support Spanish tyranny,

and it was the dearest object of Netherland ambition to confront their enemy in both those regions, and to clip both those overshadowing wings of his commerce at once.

The intelligence, enthusiasm, and tenacity in wrestling against immense obstacles manifested by the young republic at this great expanding era of the world's history can hardly be exaggerated. It was fitting that the little commonwealth, which was foremost among the nations in its hatred of tyranny, its love of maritime adventure, and its aptitude for foreign trade, should take the lead in the great commercial movements which characterized the close of the sixteenth and the commencement of the seventeenth centuries.

While Barendz and Heemskerk were attempting to force the frozen gates which were then supposed to guard the northern highway of commerce, fleets were fitting out in Holland to storm the Southern Pole, or at least to take advantage of the pathways already opened by the genius and enterprise of the earlier navigators of the century. Linschoten had taught his countrymen the value of the technical details of the Indian trade as then understood. The voyages of the brothers Houtmann, 1595–1600, the first Dutch expeditions to reach the East by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, were undertaken according to his precepts, and directed by the practical knowledge obtained by the Houtmanns during a residence in Portugal, but were not signalized by important discoveries. They are chiefly memorable as having laid the foundation of the vast trade out of which the republic was to derive so much material power, while at the same time they mark the slight beginnings of that mighty monopoly, the Dutch East India Company, which was to teach such tremendous lessons in commercial restriction to a still more colossal English corporation, that mercantile tyrant only in our own days overthrown.

At the same time and at the other side of the world seven ships, fitted out from Holland by private enterprise, were forcing their way to the South Sea through the terrible strait between Patagonia and Fire Land, then supposed the

only path around the globe. For the tortuous mountain channel, filled with whirlpools and reefs, and the home of perpetual tempest, which had been discovered in the early part of the century by Magellan, was deemed the sole opening pierced by nature through the mighty southern circumpolar continent. A few years later a daring Hollander was to demonstrate the futility of this theory, and to give his own name to a broader pathway, while the stormy headland of South America, around which the great current of universal commerce was thenceforth to sweep, was baptized by the name of the tranquil town in West Friesland where most of his ship's company were born.

Meantime the seven ships under command of Jacob Mahu, Simon de Cordes, and Sebald de Weerdt, were contending with the dangers of the older route. The expedition sailed from Holland in June, 1598, but already the custom was forming itself of directing those navigators of almost unknown seas by explicit instructions from those who remained on shore, and who had never navigated the ocean at all. The consequence on this occasion was that the voyagers towards the Straits of Magellan spent a whole summer on the coast of Africa, amid pestiferous heats and distracting calms, and reached the straits only in April of the following year. Admiral Mahu and a large proportion of the crew had meantime perished of fevers contracted by following the course marked out for them by their employers, and thus diminished in numbers, half-stripped of provisions, and enfeebled by the exhausting atmosphere of the tropics, the survivors were ill prepared to confront the antarctic ordeal which they were approaching. Five months longer the fleet, under command of Admiral de Cordes, who had succeeded to the command, struggled in those straits, where, as if in the home of Æolus, all the winds of heaven seemed holding revel; but indifference to danger, discipline, and devotion to duty marked the conduct of the adventurers, even as those qualities had just been distinguishing their countrymen at the other pole. They gathered no gold, they conquered no

6 April, 1599.

kingdoms, they made few discoveries, they destroyed no fleets, yet they were the first pioneers on a path on which thereafter were to be many such achievements by the republic.

At least one heroic incident, which marked their departure from the straits, deserves to be held in perpetual remembrance. Admiral de Cordes raised on the shore, at the western mouth of the channel, a rude memorial with an inscription that the Netherlanders were the first to effect this dangerous passage with a fleet of heavy ships. On the following day, in commemoration of the event, he founded an order of knighthood. The chief officers of the squadron were the knights-commanders, and the most deserving of the crew were the knights-brethren. The members of the fraternity made solemn oath to De Cordes, as general, and to each other, that "by no danger, no necessity, nor by the fear of death, would they ever be moved to undertake anything prejudicial to their honour, to the welfare of the fatherland, or to the success of the enterprise in which they were engaged; pledging themselves to stake their lives in order, consistently with honour, to inflict every possible damage on the hereditary enemy, and to plant the banner of Holland in all those territories whence the King of Spain gathered the treasures with which he had carried on this perpetual war against the Netherlands."

Thus was instituted on the desolate shores of Fire Land the order of Knights of the Unchained Lion, with such rude solemnities as were possible in those solitudes. The harbour where the fleet was anchored was called the Chevaliers' Bay, but it would be in vain to look on modern maps for that heroic appellation. Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego know the honest knights of the Unchained Lion no more; yet to an unsophisticated mind no stately brotherhood of sovereigns and patricians seems more thoroughly inspired with the spirit of Christian chivalry than were those weather-beaten adventurers. The reefs and whirlwinds of unknown seas, polar cold, Patagonian giants, Spanish cruisers, a thousand real or fabulous dangers environed them. Their provisions were

already running near exhaustion, and they were feeding on raw seal-flesh, on snails and mussels, and on whatever the barren rocks and niggard seas would supply, to save them from absolutely perishing, but they held their resolve to maintain their honour unsullied, to be true to each other and to the republic, and to circumnavigate the globe to seek the proud enemy of their fatherland on every sea, and to do battle with him in every corner of the earth. The world had already seen, and was still to see, how nobly Netherlanders could keep their own. Meantime disaster on disaster descended on this unfortunate expedition. One ship after another melted away and was seen no more. Of all the seven, only one, that of Sebald de Weerdt, ever returned to the shores of Holland. Another reached Japan, and although the crew fell into hostile hands, the great trade with that Oriental empire was begun. In a third—the Blyde Boodschaft, or Good News—Dirk Gerrits sailed nearer the South Pole than man had ever been before, and discovered, as he believed, a portion of the southern continent, which he called, with reason good, Gerrit's Land. The name in course of time faded from maps and charts, the existence of the country was disputed, until more than two centuries later the accuracy of the Dutch commander was recognised. The re-discovered land however no longer bears his name, but has been baptized South Shetland.

Thus before the sixteenth century had closed, the navigators of Holland had reached almost the extreme verge of human discovery at either pole.[2]

[2] The chief authorities consulted for the account of these early voyages are :—

Bor, III. b. xxxi. pp. 866–873, and IV. b. xxxiv. pp. 337–344.

Begin ende Voortgang van de Vereen. Nederl. geoctroyeerde Oost Ind. Compagnie (1646) 1 Deel (*passim*) with the Original Diaries and Histories, especially 1–53.

Grotii Hist. lib. iv. 326, *seqq.* and v. 383, *seqq.*

G. Moll, Verhandeling over eenige Vroegere Zeetogten der Nederlanders. Amsterdam, 1825, pp. 14–119, *et passim.*

Bennet en Van Wijk, Verhandeling over de Nederlandsche Ontdekkingen, Utrecht, 1827, *passim.*

Van Kampen's Gesch. der Nied. I. 572, *seqq.* Compare Gesch. der Nederlanders buiten Europa, Harlem, 1831, by the same author.

Le Petit, La Grande Chronique, ii. 651, *seqq.* and 698, *seqq.*

Van Meteren also gives good summaries, especially in b. xxiii.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Military Operations in the Netherlands — Designs of the Spanish Commander — Siege of Orsoy — Advance upon Rheinberg — Murder of the Count of Broeck and his garrison — Capture of Rees and Emmerich — Outrages of the Spanish soldiers in the peaceful provinces — Inglorious attempt to avenge the hostilities — State of trade in the Provinces — Naval expedition under Van der Does — Arrival of Albert and Isabella at Brussels — Military operations of Prince Maurice — Negotiation between London and Brussels — Henry's determination to enact the Council of Trent — His projected marriage — Queen Elizabeth and Envoy Caron — Peace proposals of Spain to Elizabeth — Conferences at Gertruydenberg — Uncertain state of affairs.

THE military operations in the Netherlands during the whole year 1598 were on a comparatively small scale and languidly conducted. The States were exhausted by the demands made upon the treasury, and baffled by the disingenuous policy of their allies. The cardinal-archduke, on the other hand, was occupied with the great events of his marriage, of his father-in-law's death, and of his own succession in conjunction with his wife to the sovereignty of the provinces.

In the autumn, however, the Admiral of Arragon, who, as has been stated, was chief military commander during the absence of Albert, collected an army of twenty-five thousand foot and two thousand cavalry, crossed the Meuse at Roermond, and made his appearance before a small town called Orsoy, on the Rhine. It was his intention to invade the duchies of Cleves, Juliers, and Berg, taking advantage of the supposed madness of the duke, and of the Spanish inclinations of his chief counsellors, who constituted a kind of regency. By obtaining possession of these important provinces—wedged as they were between the territory of the republic, the obedient Netherlands, and Germany—an excellent military position would be gained for making war upon the rebellious

districts from the east, for crushing Protestantism in the duchies, for holding important passages of the Rhine, and for circumventing the designs of the Protestant sons-in-law and daughters of the old Duke of Cleves. Of course, it was the determination of Maurice and the States-General to frustrate these operations. German and Dutch Protestantism gave battle on this neutral ground to the omnipotent tyranny of the papacy and Spain.

Unfortunately, Maurice had but a very slender force that autumn at his command. Fifteen hundred horse and six thousand infantry were all his effective troops, and with these he took the field to defend the borders of the republic, and to out-manœuvre, so far as it might lie in his power, the admiral with his far-reaching and entirely unscrupulous designs.

With six thousand Spanish veterans, two thousand Italians, and many Walloon and German regiments under Bucquoy, Hachincourt, La Bourlotte, Stanley, and Frederic van den Berg, the admiral had reached the frontiers of the mad duke's territory. Orsoy was garrisoned by a small company of "cocks' feathers," or country squires, and their followers.

Presenting himself in person before the walls of the town, with a priest at his right hand and a hangman holding a bundle of halters at the other, he desired to be informed whether the governor would prefer to surrender or to hang with his whole garrison. The cock-feathers surrendered.[1]

Sept. 1–8.

The admiral garrisoned and fortified Orsoy as a basis and advanced upon Rheinberg, first surprising the Count of Broeck in his castle, who was at once murdered in cold blood with his little garrison.

He took Burik on the 11th October, Rheinberg on the 15th of the same month, and compounded with Wesel for a hundred and twenty thousand florins. Leaving garrisons in these and a few other captured places, he crossed the Lippe, came to Borhold, and ravaged the whole country side. His

[1] Meteren, 399–404.

troops being clamorous for pay were only too eager to levy black-mail on this neutral territory. The submission of the authorities to this treatment brought upon them a reproach of violation of neutrality by the States-General; the Governments of Munster and of the duchies being informed that, if they aided and abetted the one belligerent, they must expect to be treated as enemies by the other.[2]

The admiral took Rees on the 30th October, and Emmerich on the 2nd November—two principal cities of Cleves. On the 8th November he crossed into the territory of the republic and captured Deutekom, after a very short siege. Maurice, by precaution, occupied Sevenaer in Cleves. The prince—whose difficult task was to follow up and observe an enemy by whom he was outnumbered nearly four to one, to harass him by skirmishes, to make forays on his communications, to seize important points before he could reach them, to impose upon him by an appearance of far greater force than the republican army could actually boast, to protect the cities of the frontier like Zutphen, Lochem, and Doesburg, and to prevent him from attempting an invasion of the United Provinces in force, by crossing any of the rivers, either in the autumn or after the winter's ice had made them passable for the Spanish army—succeeded admirably in all his strategy. The admiral never ventured to attack him, for fear of risking a defeat of his whole army by an antagonist whom he ought to have swallowed at a mouthful, relinquished all designs upon the republic, passed into Munster, Cleves, and Berg, and during the whole horrible winter converted those peaceful provinces into a hell. No outrage which even a Spanish army could inflict was spared the miserable inhabitants. Cities and villages were sacked and burned, the whole country was placed under the law of black-mail. The places of worship, mainly Protestant, were all converted at a blow of the sword into Catholic churches. Men were hanged, butchered, tossed in sport from the tops of steeples, burned, and buried alive. Women of every rank were subjected by thousands to outrage

[2] Bor, IV. 482-496. Meteren, 399, 404.

too foul and too cruel for any but fiends or Spanish soldiers to imagine.[3]

Such was the lot of thousands of innocent men and women at the hands of Philip's soldiers in a country at peace with Philip, at the very moment when that monarch was protesting with a seraphic smile on his expiring lips that he had never in his whole life done injury to a single human being.

In vain did the victims call aloud upon their sovereign, the Emperor Rudolph. The Spaniards laughed the feeble imperial mandates to scorn, and spurned the word neutrality. "Oh, poor Roman Empire!" cried John Fontanus, "how art thou fallen! Thy protector has become thy despoiler, and, although thy members see this and know it, they sleep through it all. One day they may have a terrible awakening from their slumbers. . . . . The Admiral of Arragon has entirely changed the character of the war, recognizes no neutrality, saying that there must be but one God, one pope, and one king, and that they who object to this arrangement must be extirpated with fire and sword, let them be where they may." [4]

The admiral, at least, thoroughly respected the claims of the dead Philip to universal monarchy.

Maurice gained as much credit by the defensive strategy through which he saved the republic from the horrors thus afflicting its neighbours, as he had ever done by his most brilliant victories. Queen Elizabeth was enchanted with the prowess of the prince, and with the sagacious administration of those republican magistrates whom she never failed to respect, even when most inclined to quarrel with them. "Never before was it written or heard of," said the queen, "that so great an extent of country could be defended with so few troops, that an invasion of so superior a hostile force could be prevented, especially as it appeared that all the streams and rivers were frozen." This, she added, was owing to the wise and far-seeing counsels of the States-General, and to the faithful diligence of their military com-

[3] Bor. Meteren, *ubi sup.* [4] Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, I. 407 (2 Ser.)

mander, who now, as she declared, deserved the title of the first captain of all Christendom.[5]

A period of languor and exhaustion succeeded. The armies of the States had dwindled to an effective force of scarcely four or five thousand men, while the new levies came in but slowly. The taxation, on the other hand, was very severe. The quotas for the provinces had risen to the amount of five million eight hundred thousand florins for the year 1599, against an income of four millions six hundred thousand, and this deficit went on increasing, notwithstanding a new tax of one-half per cent. on the capital of all estates above three thousand florins in value, and another of two and a half per cent. on all sales of real property.[6] The finances of the obedient provinces were in a still worse condition, and during the absence of the cardinal-archduke an almost universal mutiny, occasioned by the inability of the exchequer to provide payment for the troops, established itself throughout Flanders and Brabant. There was much recrimination on the subject of the invasion of the Rhenish duchies, and a war of pamphlets and manifestos between the archduke's Government and the States-General succeeded to those active military operations by which so much misery had been inflicted on the unfortunate inhabitants of that border land. There was a slight attempt on the part of the Princes of Brunswick, Hesse, and Brandenburg to counteract and to punish the hostilities of the Spanish troops committed upon German soil. An army —very slowly organized, against the wishes of the emperor, the bishops, and the Catholic party—took the field, and made a feeble demonstration upon Rheinberg and upon Rees entirely without result and then disbanded itself ingloriously.[7]

Meantime the admiral had withdrawn from German territory, and was amusing himself with a variety of blows aimed at vital points of the republic. An excursion into the Isle of Bommel was not crowned with much success. The assault on the city was repulsed. The fortress of Crevecœur was,

[5] Caron to the States-General. Van der Kemp, ii. 199. [6] Wagenaar, ix. 39
[7] Wagenaar, ix. 39–72. Bor, IV. 522, *seqq.*, 591, 608. Meteren, b. xxi.

however, taken, and the fort of St. Andrew constructed—in spite of the attempts of the States to frustrate the design—at a point commanding the course of both the Waal and the Meuse. Having placed a considerable garrison in each of those strongholds, the admiral discontinued his labours and went into winter-quarters.[8]

The States-General for political reasons were urgent that Prince Maurice should undertake some important enterprise, but the stadholder, sustained by the opinion of his cousin Lewis William, resisted the pressure. The armies of the Commonwealth were still too slender in numbers and too widely scattered for active service on a large scale, and the season for active campaigning was wisely suffered to pass without making any attempt of magnitude during the year.

The trade of the provinces, moreover, was very much hampered, and their revenues sadly diminished by the severe prohibitions which had succeeded to the remarkable indulgence hitherto accorded to foreign commerce. Edicts in the name of the King of Spain and of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella, forbidding all intercourse between the rebellious provinces and the obedient Netherlands or any of the Spanish possessions, were met by countervailing decrees of the States-General. Free trade with its enemies and with all the world, by means of which the commonwealth had prospered in spite of perpetual war, was now for a season destroyed, and the immediate results were at once visible in its diminished resources. To employ a portion of the maritime energies of the Hollanders and Zeelanders, thus temporarily deprived of a sufficient field, a naval expedition of seventy-five war vessels under Admiral van der Does was fitted out, but met with very trifling success. They attacked and plundered the settlements and forts of the Canary Islands, inflicted much damage on the inhabitants, sailed thence to the Isle of St. Thomas, near the equator, where the towns and villages were sacked and burned, and where a contagious sickness broke out in the fleet, sweeping off in a very brief period a large

[8] Wagenaar, Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

proportion of the crew. The admiral himself fell a victim to the disease and was buried on the island. The fleet put to sea again under Admiral Storm van Wena, but the sickness pursued the adventurers on their voyage towards Brazil, one thousand of them dying at sea in fifteen days. At Brazil they accomplished nothing, and, on their homeward voyage, not only the new commander succumbed to the same contagion, but the mortality continued to so extraordinary an extent that, on the arrival of the expedition late in the winter in Holland, there were but two captains left alive, and, in many of the vessels, not more than six sound men to each.[9] Nothing could be more wretched than this termination of a great and expensive voyage, which had occasioned such high hopes throughout the provinces ; nothing more dismal than the political atmosphere which surrounded the republic during the months which immediately ensued. It was obvious to Barneveld and the other leading personages, in whose hands was the administration of affairs, that a great military success was absolutely indispensable, if the treacherous cry of peace, when peace was really impossible, should not become universal and fatal.

Meantime affairs were not much more cheerful in the obedient provinces. Archduke Albert arrived with his bride in the early days of September, 1599, at Brussels, and was received with great pomp and enthusiastic rejoicings. When are pomp and enthusiasm not to be obtained by imperial personages, at brief notice and in vast quantities, if managers understand their business ? After all, it may be doubted whether the theatrical display was as splendid as that which marked the beginning of the Ernestian era. Schoolmaster Houwaerts had surpassed himself on that occasion, and was no longer capable of deifying the new sovereign as thoroughly as he had deified his brother.

Much real discontent followed close upon the fictitious enthusiasm. The obedient provinces were poor and forlorn,

[9] Bor, Meteren, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* See letters of Buzanval in Vreede, *passim.*

and men murmured loudly at the enormous extravagance of their new master's housekeeping. There were one hundred and fifty mules, and as many horses in their sovereign's stables, while the expense of feeding the cooks, lackeys, pages, and fine gentlemen who swelled the retinue of the great household, was estimated, without wages or salaries, at two thousand florins a day.[10] Albert had wished to be called a king,[11] but had been unable to obtain the gratification of his wish. He had aspired to be emperor, and he was at least sufficiently imperial in his ideas of expense.[12] The murmurers were loftily rebuked for their complaints, and reminded of the duty of obedient provinces to contribute at least as much for the defence of their masters as the rebels did in maintenance of their rebellion. The provincial estates were summoned accordingly to pay roundly for the expenses of the war as well as of the court, and to enable the new sovereigns to suppress the military mutiny, which amid the enthusiasm greeting their arrival was the one prominent and formidable fact.

The archduke was now thirty-nine years of age, the Infanta Isabella six years younger. She was esteemed majestically beautiful by her courtiers, and Cardinal Bentivoglio, himself a man of splendid intellect, pronounced her a woman of genius, who had grown to be a prodigy of wisdom, under the tuition of her father, the most sagacious statesman of the age.[13] In attachment to the Roman faith and ritual, in superhuman loftiness of demeanour, and in hatred of heretics, she was at least a worthy child of that sainted sovereign.[14] In a moral point of view she was his superior. The archdukes—so Albert and Isabella were always designated—were a singularly attached couple, and their household, if extravagant and imperial, was harmonious. They

[10] Bor, IV. 578.

[11] Albert to Philip, 20 April, 1598. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Same to same, 13 July, 1598. (Ibid.)

[12] Ibid.

[13] Relazione delle prov^e. ubbte. 57, 58.

[14] "Die Infantin ausz Hispanien," wrote Fontanus, "weis nit dan von hängen, brennen, morden und wütten zu sprechen; man musz irer Majestät auff den knien sitzen dienen, auch die Staten der Provincien welches ihnen gar ungern thut."—Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, II. 8 (2 Ser.)

loved each other—so it was believed—as sincerely as they abhorred heretics and rebels, but it does not appear that they had a very warm affection for their Flemish subjects. Every characteristic of their court was Spanish. Spanish costume, Spanish manners, the Spanish tongue, were almost exclusively predominant, and although the festivals, dances, banquets, and tourneys, were all very magnificent, the prevailing expression of the Brabantine capital resembled that of a Spanish convent,[15] so severely correct, so stately, and so grim, was the demeanour of the court.

The earliest military operations of the stadholder in the first year of the new century were successful. Partly by menace, but more effectually by judicious negotiation, Maurice recovered Crevecœur, and obtained the surrender of St. Andrew, the fort which the admiral had built the preceding year in honour of Albert's uncle. That ecclesiastic, with whom Mendoza had wrangled most bitterly during the whole interval of Albert's absence, had already taken his departure for Rome, where he soon afterwards died.[16] The garrisons of the forts, being mostly Walloon soldiers, forsook the Spanish service for that of the States, and were banded together in a legion some twelve hundred strong, which became known as the "New Beggars," and were placed under the nominal command of Frederick Henry of Nassau, youngest child of William the Silent. The next military event of the year was a mad combat, undertaken by formal cartel, between Breauté, a young Norman noble in the service of the republic, and twenty comrades, with an equal number of Flemish warriors from the obedient provinces, under Grobbendonck. About one half of the whole number were killed, including the leaders, but the encounter, although exciting much interest at the time, had of course no permanent importance.[17] 1600.

There was much negotiation, informal and secret, between Brussels and London during this and a portion of the follow-

[15] Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* [16] Wagenaar, ix. 64.
[17] Wagenaar, ix. 39–72. Bor, IV. 522–603. Meteren, book xxi.

ing year. Elizabeth, naturally enough, was weary of the war, but she felt, after all, as did the Government of France, that a peace between the United Netherlands and Spain would have for its result the restoration of the authority of his most Catholic Majesty over all the provinces. The statesmen of France and England, like most of the politicians of Europe, had but slender belief in the possibility of a popular government, and doubted therefore the continued existence of the newly-organized republic.[18] Therefore they really deprecated the idea of a peace which should include the States, notwithstanding that from time to time the queen or some of her counsellors had so vehemently reproached the Netherlanders with their unwillingness to negotiate. "At the first recognition that these people should make of the mere shadow of a prince," said Buzanval, the keenly observing and experienced French envoy at the Hague, "they lose the form they have. All the blood of the body would flow to the head, and the game would be who should best play the valet. . . . . The house of Nassau would lose its credit within a month in case of peace."[19] As such statesmen could not imagine a republic, they ever dreaded the restoration in the United Provinces of the subverted authority of Spain.

France and England were jealous of each other, and both were jealous of Spain. Therefore even if the republican element, the strength and endurance of which was so little suspected, had been as trifling a factor in the problem as was supposed, still it would have been difficult for any one of these powers to absorb the United Netherlands. As for

[18] "Da tutte queste ragioni dunque si può giudicare che non sia per conservarsi nello stato presente questa nuova republica ma che più tosto sia per mancare in breve e che finalmente sia per ridursi sotto il governo d'un solo."—Bentivoglio, Relazione delle Provincie Unite, lib. iii. cap. vii. p. 50. The continued existence of the "new republic" for two centuries after these remarks were made is an additional proof of the danger of prophesying. "Ceux qui sondent et connaissent à quoy ce mene," wrote Aerssens from Paris, "desirent changement en l'estat du gouvernement populaire et election d'un souverain. Combien peu connaissans nos necessite, nos desseins, nos maux! En tel predicament sommes nous en cette cour." 21 Mars, 1600. Lettres, in Valck. (Archives of the Hague MS.) Compare Instructions of James I. to Spencer and Winwood; Winwood's Memorials, II. 329–335, especially p. 333.

[19] Lettres et Negociations de Buzanval, par le Professeur Vreede. Leyde, 1846, p. 300.

France, she hardly coveted their possession. "We ought not to flatter ourselves," said Buzanval, "that these maritime peoples will cast themselves one day into our nets, nor do I know that it would be advisable to pull in the net if they should throw themselves in." [20]

Henry was full of political schemes and dreams at this moment—as much as his passion for Mademoiselle d'Entraigues, who had so soon supplanted the image of the dead Gabrielle in his heart, would permit. He was very well disposed to obtain possession of the Spanish Netherlands,[21] whenever he should see his way to such an acquisition, and was even indulging in visions of the imperial crown.

He was therefore already, and for the time at least, the most intense of papists.[22] He was determined to sacrifice the Huguenot chiefs, and introduce the Council of Trent, in order, as he told Du Plessis, that all might be Christians. If he still retained any remembrance of the ancient friendship between himself and the heretic republic, it was not likely

[20] Lettres, &c., *ubi sup.*

[21] Nor would it seem that the project, although much feared by the English queen, was at all distasteful to the Netherland statesmen. "M'ayant souvent dit et redit Bernefeld," wrote Buzanval, "que si le roy vouloit repeter les droits qu'il pretend sur les dites provinces que les Etats des Provinces Unies luy ayderoient pour un tel effet de toute leur force, ne pretendant iceux etats pour tout butin que l'assurance de cette coste de mer, et certes si cela etoit, ils pourront donner sauvement et a leur aise avec une bonne et etroite alliance qu'ils esperoient faire avec la France qui les maintiendroit contre toute autre force etrangere de quelque costé qu'elle peut arriver. M. le P. Maurice me parlant de Dunkerque le jour de son partement je luy fis demande s'il la pourroit maintenir apres l'avoir conquise, il me dit que malaisement sans y tenir toujours une armée. Je le pressay davantage et jusques la qu'il vint a me dire 'Je crois que les etats feroient bien en un tel cas de la mettre en mains du roy;' je lui dis que je ne pensois pas que nous voulussions rompre notre jeusne pour si peu de chose. Si faut il, dit il, ou que cette ville nous mange ou que nous la mangions si nous la tenons une fois," &c.—Buzanval to Villeroy, 25 June, 1600. (MS. in Royal Library at the Hague.)

[22] "Aussy sommes nous en temps icy que les affaires se couvent et attendent leur forme par le force. La desunion de ceux de la religion est projettée, le Concile de Trente en cette consideration en bon terme pour la verification, le Sr du Plessis sacrifié au pape, les Jesuites sur le retour, l'empire promis au roy et son mariage arreté pour le mois de Septembre."—Aerssens to Valck, 19 May, 1600, MS.

"Sa Majesté ces jours passes dit a bon escient à M. de Bouillon sur ces doleances pour l'Assemblee contre ces forcées conversions que comme roy il doit desirer qu'une religion en son royaume et à M. du Plessis alleguant les inconveniens du Concile (de Trent) sy faut il (fit il) qu'enfin nous soions tous Chretiens."—Aerssens to Valck, 10 April, 1600. (Hague Archives MS.)

to exhibit itself, notwithstanding his promises and his pecuniary liabilities to her, in anything more solid than words. "I repeat it," said the Dutch envoy at Paris; "this court cares nothing for us, for all its cabals tend to close union with Rome, whence we can expect nothing but foul weather. The king alone has any memory of our past services."[23] But imperturbable and self-confident as ever, Henry troubled himself little with fears in regard to the papal supremacy, even when his Parliament professed great anxiety in regard to the consequences of the Council of Trent, if not under him yet under his successors. "I will so bridle the popes," said he, cheerfully, "that they will never pass my restrictions. My children will be still more virtuous and valiant than I. If I have none, then the devil take the hindmost. Nevertheless I choose that the council shall be enacted. I desire it more ardently than I pressed the edict for the Protestants."[24] Such being the royal humour at the moment, it may well be believed that Duplessis Mornay would find but little sunshine from on high on the occasion of his famous but forgotten conferences with Du Perron, now archbishop of Evreux, before the king and all the court at Fontainebleau. It was natural enough that to please the king the king's old Huguenot friend should be convicted of false citations from the fathers; but it would seem strange, were the motives unknown, that Henry should have been so intensely interested in this most arid and dismal of theological controversies. Yet those who had known and observed the king closely for thirty years, declared that he had never manifested so much passion, neither on the eve of battles nor of amorous assignations, as he then did for the demolition of Duplessis and his deductions. He had promised the Nuncius that the Huguenot should be utterly confounded, and with him the whole fraternity, "for," said the king, "he has wickedly and impudently written against the pope, to whom I owe as much as I do to God."[25]

[23] Aerssens to Valck, *ubi sup.*

[24] Same to same, 6 May, 1600. (Hague Archives MS.) "Sauve qui peut," &c.

[25] Same to same, 9 May, 1600. (Hague Archives MS.) Compare De

These were not times in which the Hollanders, battling as stoutly against Spain and the pope as they had done during the years when the republic stood shoulder to shoulder with Henry the Huguenot, could hope for aid and comfort from their ancient ally.

It is very characteristic of that age of dissimulation and of reckless political gambling, that at the very moment when Henry's marriage with Marie de Medicis was already arranged, and when that princess was soon expected in Lyons, a cabal at the king's court was busy with absurd projects to marry their sovereign to the Infanta of Spain. It is true that the Infanta was already the wife of the cardinal-archduke, but it was thought possible—for reasons divulged through the indiscretions or inventions of the father confessor—to obtain the pope's dispensation on the ground of the nullity of the marriage.[26] Thus there were politicians at the French court seriously occupied in an attempt to deprive the archduke of his wife, of his Netherland provinces, and of the crown of the holy Roman empire,[27] which he still hoped to inherit.[28] Yet

Thou (who was one of the Catholic umpires at the conference), t. xiii. pp. 445–449, L. 123.

[26] Vous rirez si je vous dis," wrote Aerssens, minister of the Dutch Republic in France, to Valcke "que le secret en est qu'on pretend encor de fair espouser l'Infante d'Espagne au roy, qui à cette occasion ne se haste point vers Lyon et a rejetté la venue de la Florentine jusqu'en Octobre, l'obligeant à la compagnie de sa sœur. Le plus vrai est que le roy prend ceci pour pretext. Car il pense totalement a M^lle^ d'Antraigues à laquelle il a donné seconde promesse en cas de masle. Cependant ou a sceu de bonne part que l'Infante ayant conferé avec sa dame d'honneur s'etait plaint de l'inhabilité de l'archiduc aux parties fondumentalles du mariage. Sur quoy elle projettait une dispense a Rome, mediation par le roy, durant le sejour de Madame la Duchesse de Beaufort en ceste cour, qui ne s'en est espargnée au rapport. Ce que je dis est vrai pour la caballe, mais j'ignore la verité du faict et quand tout seroit ainsi on s'aveugle trop au desir de croire que le Roy d'Espagne souffrist ceste alliance, &c."—Aerssens to Valck, 12 June, 1600. (Hague Archives MS.)

[27] "Le Comte de Manderscheyd a parlé assez franchement à Monsieur le Prince Maurice, comme il m'a dit des indispositions ordinaires de la cervelle de l'Empereur, du peu de contentement que les princes soit Catholiques soit protestants commencent à avoir de luy et du desir qu'ilsont de se transferer l'empire à une autre maison que celle de Autriche. . . . . Cela nous doit faire un peu lever les oreilles en nous rendant capable de grandes choses." &c.—Buzanval to Villeroy, 25 June, 1600. (Lettres de Buzanval in the Royal Library of the Hague MS.)

[28] "L'archiduc . . . . qui touche déjà du doigt à l'election du Roy des Romains."—Vreede, Negociations de Buzanval, p. 281.

the ink was scarcely dry with which Henry had signed the treaty of amity with Madrid and Brussels.

The Queen of England, on the other hand—although often listening to secret agents from Brussels and Madrid who offered peace, and although perfectly aware that the great object of Spain in securing peace with England was to be able to swoop down at once upon the republic, thus deprived of any allies—[29] was beside herself with rage, whenever she suspected, with or without reason, that Brussels or Madrid had been sending peace emissaries to the republic.

"Before I could get into the room," said Caron, on one such occasion, "she called out, 'Have you not always told me that the States never could, would, or should treat for peace with the enemy? Yet now it is plain enough that they have proceeded only too far in negotiations.' And she then swore a big oath that if the States were to deceive her she meant to take such vengeance that men should talk of it for ever and ever." It was a long time before the envoy could induce her to listen to a single word, although the perfect sincerity of the States in their attitude to the queen and to Spain was unquestionable,[30] and her ill-humour on the subject continued long after it had been demonstrated how much she had been deceived.

Yet it was impossible in the nature of things for the States to play her false, even if no reliance were to be placed on their sagacity and their honour. Even the recent naval expedition of the republic against the distant possessions of Spain—which in its result had caused so much disappointment to the States, and cost them so many lives, including that of the noble admiral whom every sailor in the Netherlands adored[31]—had been of immense advantage to England. The queen

[29] "Cette paix l'Angleterre vers laquelle ny l'Espagne ny Bruxelles ne daigneroient pas tourner les yeux si ce n'estoit pour l'esperance qu'on leur donne que par cette ouverture ils entreront dans ces Provinces Unies." —Buzanval to Villeroy, 14 Nov. 1599. Vreede, Negociations de Buzanval, p. 315.

[30] Caron to the States, 25 July, 1600. (Archives of the Hague MS.)

[31] "Van der Does . . . adoré de cette race de matelots comme un saint."—Negociations de Buzanval, p. 139.

acknowledged that the Dutch navy had averted the storm which threatened to descend upon her kingdom out of Spain, the Spanish ships destined for the coast of Ireland having been dispersed and drawn to the other side of the world by these demonstrations of her ally. For this she vowed that she would be eternally grateful, and she said as much in "letters full of sugar and honey"—according to the French envoy—which she sent to the States by Sir Francis Vere.[32] She protested, in short, that she had been better and more promptly served in her necessities by the Netherlands than by her own subjects.[33]

All this sugar and honey however did not make the mission of Envoy Edmonds less bitter to the States. They heard that he was going about through half the cities of the obedient Netherlands in a sort of triumphal procession, and it was the general opinion of the politicians and financiers of the continent that peace between Spain and England was as good as made. Naturally therefore, notwithstanding the exuberant expressions of gratitude on the part of Elizabeth, the republican Government were anxious to know what all this parleying meant. They could not believe that people would make a raree-show of the English envoy except for sufficient reason.[34] Caron accordingly presented himself before the queen, with respectful inquiries on the subject. He found her in appearance very angry, not with him, but with Edmonds, from whom she had received no advices. "I don't know what they are doing with him," said her Majesty, "I hear from others that they are ringing the church bells wherever he goes, and that they have carried him through a great

26 Jan. 1600.

[32] Negotiations de Buzanval, pp. 331, 332.

[33] Ibid. "Ayant iceulx navires pris l'isle de la grande Canarie avecq la ville et chasteaux d' Mecq. La cour d'Espagne en apprint la nouvelle au mois de Juillet avecq advis que les notres s'y fortifioient la quelle fit changer au conseil d'Espagne la dite resolution et trouver bon de conserver le leur a empecher la dite fortification et chasser nos navires de la mer et par ainsi a remectre leur premier dessein pour l'an prochain. Sur quoy il fut commandé au dit Adelantado de se transporter avec le plus forte de la flotte vers la grande Canarie comme aussi sur la fin du mois d'Aougst il a cinglé vers la avecq environ cinquante navires de guerre," &c.—States-General to the Queen, 17 Oct. 1599. (Archives of the Hague MS.)

[34] Aerssens to Valck, 10 April, 1600. (MS. before cited.)

many more places than was necessary. I suppose that they think him a monster, and they are carrying him about to exhibit him. All this is done," she continued, "to throw dust in the eyes of the poor people, and to put it into their heads that the Queen of England is suing for peace, which is very wide of the mark."[35]

She further observed that, as the agents of the Spanish Government had been perpetually sending to her, she had been inclined once for all to learn what they had to say. Thus she should make manifest to all the world that she was not averse to a treaty such as might prove a secure peace for herself and for Christendom; otherwise not.

It subsequently appeared that what they had to say was that if the queen would give up to the Spanish Government the cautionary towns which she held as a pledge for her advances to the republic, forbid all traffic and intercourse between her subjects and the Netherlanders, and thenceforth never allow an Englishman to serve in or with the armies of the States, a peace might be made.[36]

Surely it needed no great magnanimity on the queen's part to spurn such insulting proposals, the offer of which showed her capable, in the opinion of Verreycken, the man who made them, of sinking into the very depths of dishonour. And she did spurn them. Surely, for the ally, the protrectress, the grateful friend of the republic, to give its chief seaports

[35] "Bevondt wel dat sy toornig was dat sy van hem niet verstaen hadde seggende ick en weet niet wat zy daer met hem mogen maken. Ick verstae door andere dat men de clocken geluydt heeft daer hy gepasseert is ende dat men hem door meer plaetsen gevoert heeft dan daer hy passeren moste. Ick meene seyde H. M. dat sy meenen dat het een monster is ende dat sy hem willen dragen te thoonen, twelck al gedaen wordt soo sy seyde omme het arme Volck te verblinden ende henlieden wys te maken dat de Coninginne van Engelhandt henl. tot payse dede versoncken 't welck soo sy seyde verre van huyse was," &c.—Caron to States-General, 26 Jan. 1600. (Archives of the Hague MS.)

[36] "Doch seyde alsoo zy den voors. Edmonds gelest hadde aldaer opentlyck te vertoonen, dat zy niet en meende haer Commissarien te senden tenwaere zy ezpresselyck resileerden van de drie puncten die Vereycken haer voorgehouden hadde. U. E. staet ende landen raeckende, te weeten, het geven van de cautionnaire steden, in henne handen, het verbieden van de trafficque ende negotiatie van haere subjecten met die van U. E. ende dat dezelve niet souden mogen U. E. in de oorlogte dienen," &c.—Caron to States-General, 12 April, 1600. Ibid.

to its arch-enemy, to shut the narrow seas against its ships, so that they never more could sail westward, and to abandon its whole population to their fate, would be a deed of treachery such as history, full of human baseness as it is, has rarely been obliged to record.

Before these propositions had been made by Verreycken Elizabeth protested that, should he offer them, she would send him home with such an answer that people should talk of it for some time to come. "Before I consent to a single one of those points," said the queen, "I wish myself taken from this world. Until now I have been a princess of my word, who would rather die than so falsely deceive such good people as the States."[37] And she made those protestations with such expression and attitude that the Dutch envoy believed her incapable at that moment of dissimulation.[38]

Nevertheless her indignation did not carry her so far as to induce her to break off the negotiations. The answer of which mankind was to talk in time to come was simply that she would not send her commissioners to treat for peace unless the Spanish Government should recede from the three points thus offered by Verreycken.[39] This certainly was not a very blasting reply, and the Spanish agents were so far from losing heart in consequence that the informal conferences continued for a long time, much to the discomfort of the Netherlanders.

For more than an hour and a half on one occasion of an uncommonly hot afternoon in April did Noel de Caron argue with her Majesty against these ill-boding negotiations, and ever and anon, oppressed by the heat of the weather and the argument, did the queen wander from one room of the palace to the other in search of cool air, still bidding the envoy follow her footsteps. "We are travelling about like pilgrims," said Elizabeth, "but what is life but a pilgrimage?"

Yet, notwithstanding this long promenade and these moral

[37] Caron to the States, 22 Feb. 1600. (Archives of the Hague MS.)
[38] Ibid. [39] Same to same, 12 April, 1600.—MS. before cited.

reflections, Caron could really not make out at the end of the interview whether or no she intended to send her commissioners. At last he asked her the question bluntly.

"Hallo! Hallo!" she replied. "I have only spoken to my servant once, and I must obtain more information and think over the matter before I decide. Be assured however that I shall always keep you informed of the progress of the negotiations, and do you inform the States that they may build upon me as upon a rock."[40]

After the envoy had taken his leave, the queen said to him in Latin, "*Modicæ fidei quare dubitasti?*"[41] Caron had however so nearly got out of the door that he did not hear this admonition.

This the queen perceived, and calling him by name repeated, "*O Caron! modicæ fidei quare dubitasti?*" adding the injunction that he should remember this *dictum*, for he well knew what she meant by it.[42]

Thus terminated the interview, while the negotiations with Spain, not for lack of good-will on her part, and despite the positive assertions to the contrary of Buzanval and other foreign agents, were destined to come to nothing.

At a little later period, at the time of certain informal and secret conferences at Gertruydenberg, the queen threatened the envoy with her severest displeasure, should the States dare to treat with Spain without her permission. "Her Majesty called out to me," said Caron, "as soon as I entered the room, that I had always assured her that the States neither would nor could make peace with the enemy. Yet it was now looking very differently, she continued, swearing with a mighty oath that if the States should cheat her in that way she meant to revenge herself in such a fashion that men would talk of it through all eternity.[43]

[40] Caron to States-General, 12 April, 1600.—MS. before cited. "Maer zy antwoorde my terstondt holá, holá, ick en hebbe mynen dienaer noch maer eens gesproken ende my daerop noch anders informeren ende beraden, doch zyt versekert dat ick altyts in 't naerder progres sal doen verstaen ende versekert oock de Staten dat zy op my mogen gronden als op een roc dien henlieden nemmer en sal failleren."

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Caron's Despatch, in Van Deventer, ii. 289.

The French Government was in a similar state of alarm in consequence of the Gertruydenberg conferences.[44]

The envoy of the archdukes, Marquis d'Havré, reported on the other hand that all attempts to negotiate had proved fruitless, that Olden-Barneveld, who spoke for all his colleagues, was swollen with pride, and made it but too manifest that the States had no intention to submit to any foreign jurisdiction, but were resolved to maintain themselves in the form of a republic.[45]

[44] Caron's Despatches, in Van Deventer, ii. 289. Aerssens' Despatch.
[45] Ibid. Havré to the Archduke.

NOTE.—Page 107. 107, 108 *notes*. Page 386, lines 6, 7.

It will be observed that the officer mortally wounded at the taking of Cadiz, 2nd July, 1596, bears in the text (iii. 386) the same name—Nicolas Meetkerke—with that of the Colonel killed at the capture of Deventer, 10th June, 1591 (iii. 107). Meteren, B. xvi and xviii, fol. 333, and 388, 389, and other contemporary authorities, state the fact without comment on the identity of name. It is possible, however, that the Meetkerke killed at Cadiz was one of the remaining sons of the President of Flanders, and that his Christian name was Baldwin or Adolph.

END OF VOL. III.

HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS

BOOK IV



Mierevelt pinxit.

PRINCE MAURICE OF ORANGE-NASSAU.

"Tandem fit surculus arbor."

THE UNITED NETHERLANDS.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Military events — Aggressive movement of the Netherlanders — State of the Archduke's provinces — Mutiny of the Spanish forces — Proposed invasion of Flanders by the States-General — Disembarkation of the troops on the Spanish coasts — Capture of Oudenburg and other places — Surprise of Nieuport — Conduct of the Archduke — Oudenburg and the other forts re-taken — Dilemma of the States' army — Attack of the Archduke on Count Ernest's cavalry — Panic and total overthrow of the advance-guard of the States' army — Battle of Nieuport — Details of the action — Defeat of the Spanish army — Results of the whole expedition.

THE effect produced in the republic by the defensive and uneventful campaigning of the year 1599 had naturally been depressing. There was murmuring at the vast amount of taxation, especially at the new imposition of one-half per cent. upon all property, and two-and-a-half per cent. on all sales, which seemed to produce so few results. The successful protection of the Isle of Bommel and the judicious purchase of the two forts of Crevecœur and St. Andrew, early in the following year, together with their garrisons, were not military events of the first magnitude, and were hardly enough to efface the mortification felt at the fact that the enemy had been able so lately to construct one of those strongholds within the territory of the commonwealth.

It was now secretly determined to attempt an aggressive movement on a considerable scale, and to carry the war once for all into the heart of the obedient provinces. It was from Flanders that the Spanish armies drew a great portion of their supplies. It was by the forts erected on the coast of

Flanders in the neighbourhood of Ostend that this important possession of the States was rendered nearly valueless. It was by privateers swarming from the ports of Flanders, especially from Nieuport and Dunkirk, that the foreign trade of the republic was crippled, and its intercommunications by river and estuary rendered unsafe. Dunkirk was simply a robbers' cave, a station from which an annual tax was levied upon the commerce of the Netherlands, almost sufficient, had it been paid to the national treasury instead of to the foreign freebooters, to support the expenses of a considerable army.

On the other hand the condition of the archdukes seemed deplorable. Never had mutiny existed before in so well-organised and definite a form even in the Spanish Netherlands.

Besides those branches of the "Italian republic," which had been established in the two fortresses of Crevecœur and St. Andrew, and which had already sold themselves to the States, other organisations quite as formidable existed in various other portions of the obedient provinces. Especially at Diest and Thionville the rebellious Spaniards and Italians were numbered by thousands, all veterans, well armed, fortified in strong cities, and supplying themselves with perfect regularity by contributions levied upon the peasantry, obeying their Eletto and other officers with exemplary promptness, and paying no more heed to the edicts or the solicitations of the archduke than if he had been the Duke of Muscovy.

The opportunity seemed tempting to strike a great blow. How could Albert and Isabella, with an empty exchequer and a mutinous army, hope either to defend their soil from attack or to aim a counter blow at the republic, even if the republic for a season should be deprived of a portion of its defenders?

The reasoning was plausible, the prize tempting. The States-General, who habitually discountenanced rashness, and were wont to impose superfluous restraints upon the valiant but discreet Lewis William, and upon the deeply pondering but energetic Maurice, were now grown as ardent

as they had hitherto been hesitating. In the early days of June it was determined in secret session to organize a great force in Holland and Zeeland, and to embark suddenly for Nieuport, to carry that important position by surprise or assault, and from that basis to redeem Dunkirk. The possession of these two cities, besides that of Ostend, which had always been retained by the Republic, would ensure the complete subjugation of Flanders. The trifling force of two thousand men under Rivas—all that the archduke then had in that province—and the sconces and earthworks which had been constructed around Ostend to impede the movements and obstruct the supplies of the garrison, would be utterly powerless to prevent the consummation of the plan. Flanders once subjugated, it would not be long before the Spaniards were swept from the obedient Netherlands as thoroughly as they had been from the domains of the commonwealth, and all the seventeen provinces, trampling out every vestige of a hated foreign tyranny, would soon take their natural place as states of a free, prosperous, and powerful union.

But Maurice of Nassau did not share the convictions of the States-General. The unwonted ardour of Barneveld did not inflame his imagination. He urged that the enterprise was inexcusably rash; that its execution would require the whole army of the States, except the slender garrisons absolutely necessary to protect important places from surprise; that a defeat would not be simply disaster, but annihilation; that retreat without absolute triumph would be impossible, and that amid such circumstances the archduke, in spite of his poverty and the rebellious condition of his troops, would doubtless assemble a sufficient force to dispute with reasonable prospects of victory, this invasion of his territory.

Sir Francis Vere, too, was most decidedly opposed to the plan. He pointed out with great clearness its dangerous and possibly fatal character; assuring the States that, within a fortnight after the expedition had begun, the archduke would follow upon their heels with an army fully able to cope with

the best which they could put into the field. But besides this experienced and able campaigner, who so thoroughly shared the opinions of Prince Maurice, every military man in the provinces of any consideration was opposed to the scheme. Especially Lewis William, than whom no more sagacious military critic or accomplished strategist existed in Europe, denounced it with energy and even with indignation. It was, in the opinion of the young stadholder of Friesland, to suspend the existence of the whole commonwealth upon a silken thread. Even success, he prophesied, would bring no permanent fruits, while the consequences of an overthrow were fearful to contemplate. The immediate adherents and most trusted counsellors of William Lewis were even more unmeasured in their denunciations than he was himself. "'Tis all the work of Barneveld and the long-gowns," cried Everard van Reyd. "We are led into a sack from which there is no extrication. We are marching to the Caudine Forks.

Certainly it is no small indication of the vast influence and the indomitable resolution of Barneveld that he never faltered in this storm of indignation. The Advocate had made up his mind to invade Flanders and to capture Nieuport, and the decree accordingly went forth, despite all opposition. The States-General were sovereign, and the Advocate and the States-General were one.

It was also entirely characteristic of Maurice that he should submit his judgment on this great emergency to that of Olden-Barneveld. It was difficult for him to resist the influence of the great intellect to which he had always willingly deferred in affairs of state, and from which, even in military matters, it was hardly possible for him to escape. Yet in military matters Maurice was a consummate professor, and the Advocate in comparison but a school-boy.

The ascendency of Barneveld was the less wholesome, therefore, and it might have been better had the stadholder manifested more resolution. But Maurice had not a resolute character. Thorough soldier as he was, he was singularly vacillating, at times almost infirm of purpose, but never before

in his career had this want of decision manifested itself in so striking a manner.[1]

Accordingly the States-General, or in other words John of Olden-Barneveld, proposed to invade Flanders, and lay siege to Nieuport.[2] The States-General were sovereign, and Maurice bowed to their authority. After the matter had been entirely decided upon the state-council was consulted, and the state-council attempted no opposition to the project. The preparations were made with matchless energy and extraordinary secrecy. Lewis William, who meanwhile was to defend the eastern frontier of the republic against any possible attack, sent all the troops that it was possible to spare, but he sent them with a heavy heart. His forebodings were dismal. It seemed to him that all was about to be staked upon a single cast of the dice. Moreover it was painful to him while the terrible game was playing to be merely a looker on and a prophet of evil from a distance, forbidden to contribute by his personal skill and experience to a fortunate result. Hohenlo too was appointed to protect the southern border, and was excluded from all participation in the great expedition.

As to the enemy, such rumors as might come to them from day to day of mysterious military preparations on the part of the rebels only served to excite suspicion in other directions. The archduke was uneasy in regard to the Rhine and the Gueldrian quarter, but never dreamt of a hostile descent upon the Flemish coast.

[1] "Un gleich wie seiner Exc. manheit und gute ordnung zu loben ist," says, with some bitterness, that devoted adherent of the Nassaus, Van Reid, "so können sie nit allerdings entschuldigt werden das sie sich lieber uf importunitet kriegsonerfarner leut in solche extremitet gestellet als mit Fabio dieselbe Verachten wollen und das er nit geantwort: *malo prudens hostis me metuat quam stulti cives laudent.*"—Groen v. Prinst., Archives II. Serie ii. 15.

[2] "Le Prince Maurice n'a pas manqué de remontrer un plus asseuré chemin pour jetter la guerre dans le dit pays de Flandres et y prendre un pied qui les pourroit conduire peu a peu au but tant desiré. Mais ces Messieurs comme ennuyez de vivre en l'état incertain auquel ils se voyent reduits par les apprehensions et d'Angleterre et de notre France mesme ayment mieux hazarder ce coup de dé cependant ils se voyent de belles forces en main et celles de leur ennemi affoibliés," &c.—Buzanval to Villeroy, 18 June, 1600. (Royal Library of the Hague MS.)

Meantime, on the 19th June Maurice of Nassau made his appearance at Castle Rammekens, not far from Flushing, at the mouth of the Scheld, to superintend the great movement. So large a fleet as was there assembled had never before been seen or heard of in Christendom. Of war-ships, transports, and flat-bottomed barges there were at least thirteen hundred. Many eye-witnesses, who counted however with their imaginations, declared that there were in all at least three thousand vessels, and the statement has been reproduced by grave and trustworthy chroniclers. As the number of troops to be embarked upon the enterprise certainly did not exceed fourteen thousand, this would have been an allowance of one vessel to every five soldiers, besides the army munitions and provisions—a hardly reasonable arrangement.

Twelve thousand infantry and sixteen hundred cavalry, the consummate flower of the States' army, all well-paid, well-clad, well-armed, well-disciplined veterans, had been collected in this place of rendezvous and were ready to embark. It would be unjust to compare the dimensions of this force and the preparations for ensuring the success of the enterprise with the vast expeditions and gigantic armaments of later times, especially with the tremendous exhibitions of military and naval energy with which our own civil war has made us familiar. Maurice was an adept in all that science and art had as yet bequeathed to humanity for the purpose of human destruction, but the number of his troops was small compared to the mighty hosts which the world since those days has seen embattled. War, as a trade, was then less easily learned. It was a guild in which apprenticeship was difficult, and in which enrolment was usually for life. A little republic of scarce three million souls, which could keep always on foot a regular well-appointed army of twenty-five thousand men and a navy of one or two hundred heavily armed cruisers, was both a marvel and a formidable element in the general polity of the world. The lesson to be derived both in military and political philosophy from the famous campaign of Nieuport does not depend for its value on the

numbers of the ships or soldiers engaged in the undertaking. Otherwise, and had it been merely a military expedition like a thousand others which have been made and forgotten, it would not now deserve more than a momentary attention. But the circumstances were such as to make the issue of the impending battle one of the most important in human history. It was entirely possible that an overwhelming defeat of the republican forces on this foreign expedition would bring with it an absolute destruction of the republic, and place Spain once more in possession of the heretic "islands," from which basis she would menace the very existence of England more seriously than she had ever done before. Who could measure the consequences to Christendom of such a catastrophe?

The distance from the place where the fleet and army were assembled to Nieuport—the objective point of the enterprise—was but thirty-five miles as the crow flies. And the crow can scarcely fly in a straighter line than that described by the coast along which the ships were to shape their course. And here it is again impossible not to reflect upon the change which physical science has brought over the conduct of human affairs. We have seen in a former chapter a most important embassy sent forth from the States for the purpose of preventing the consummation of a peace between their ally and their enemy. Celerity was a vital element in the success of such a mission; for the secret negotiations which it was intended to impede were supposed to be near their termination. Yet months were consumed in a journey which in our day would have been accomplished in twenty-four hours. And now in this great military expedition the essential and immediate purpose was to surprise a small town almost within sight from the station at which the army was ready to embark. Such a midsummer voyage in this epoch of steam-tugs and transports would require but a few hours. Yet two days long the fleet lay at anchor while a gentle breeze blew persistently from the south-west. As there seemed but little hope that the wind would become more favourable, and as the possibility of sur-

prise grew fainter with every day's delay, it was decided to make a landing upon the nearest point of Flemish coast placed by circumstances within their reach. Count Ernest of Nassau, with the advance-guard, was accordingly despatched on the 21st June to the neighbourhood of the Sas of Ghent, where he seized a weakly guarded fort, called Philippine, and made thorough preparations for the arrival of the whole army. On the following day the rest of the troops made their appearance, and in the course of five hours were safely disembarked.

22 June.

The army, which consisted of Zeelanders, Frisians, Hollanders, Walloons, Germans, English, and Scotch, was divided into three corps. The advance was under the command of Count Ernest, the battalia under that of Count George Everard Solms, while the rear-guard during the march was entrusted to that experienced soldier Sir Francis Vere. Besides Prince Maurice, there were three other members of the house of Nassau serving in the expedition—his half-brother Frederic Henry, then a lad of sixteen, and the two brothers of the Frisian stadholder, Ernest and Lewis Gunther, whom Lewis William had been so faithfully educating in the arts of peace and war both by precept and example. Lewis Gunther, still a mere youth, but who had been the first to scale the fort of Cadiz, and to plant on its height the orange banner of the murdered rebel, and whose gallantry during the whole expedition had called forth the special commendations of Queen Elizabeth—expressed in energetic and affectionate terms to his father—now commanded all the cavalry. Certainly if the doctrine of primordial selection could ever be accepted among human creatures, the race of Nassau at that day might have seemed destined to be chiefs of the Netherland soil. Old John of Nassau, ardent and energetic as ever in the cause of the religious reformation of Germany and the liberation of Holland, still watched from his retirement the progress of the momentous event. Four of his brethren, including the great founder of the republic, had already laid down their lives for the sacred cause. His

son Philip had already fallen under the banner in the fight of Bislich, and three other sons were serving the republic day and night, by sea and land, with sword, and pen, and purse, energetically, conscientiously, and honourably. Of the stout hearts and quick intellects on which the safety of the commonwealth then depended, none was more efficient or true than the accomplished soldier and statesman Lewis William. Thoroughly disapproving of the present invasion of Flanders, he was exerting himself, now that it had been decided upon by his sovereigns the States-Generals, with the same loyalty as that of Maurice, to bring it to a favourable issue, although not personally engaged in the adventure.

So soon as the troops had been landed the vessels were sent off as expeditiously as possible, that none might fall into the enemy's hands; the transports under a strong convoy of war-ships having been directed to proceed as fast as the wind would permit in the direction of Nieuport. The march then began. On the 23rd they advanced a league and halted for the night at Assenede. The next day brought them three leagues further, to a place called Eckerloo. On the 25th they marched to Male, a distance of three leagues and a half, passing close to the walls of Bruges, in which they had indulged faint hopes of exciting an insurrection, but obtained nothing but a feeble cannonade from the fortifications which did no damage except the killing of one muleteer. The next night was passed at Jabbeke, four leagues from Male, and on the 27th, after marching another league, they came before the fort of Oudenburg.

This important post on the road which the army would necessarily traverse in coming from the interior to the coast was easily captured and then strongly garrisoned. Maurice with the main army spent the two following days at the fortress, completing his arrangements. Solms was sent forward to seize the sconces and redoubts of the enemy around Ostend, at Breedene, Snaaskerk, Plassendaal, and other points, and especially to occupy the important fort called St. Albert, which was in the downs at about a league from that city. All

this work was thoroughly accomplished; little or no resistance having been made to the occupation of these various places. Meantime the States-General, who at the special request of Maurice were to accompany the expedition in order to observe the progress of events for which they were entirely responsible, and to aid the army when necessary by their advice and co-operation, had assembled to the number of thirteen in Ostend. Solms having strengthened the garrison of that place then took up his march along the beach to Nieuport. During the progress of the army through Holland and Zeeland towards its place of embarkation there had been nothing but dismal prognostics, with expressions of muttered indignation, wherever the soldiers passed. It seemed to the country people, and to the inhabitants of every town and village, that their defenders were going to certain destruction; that the existence of the commonwealth was hanging by a thread soon to be snapped asunder. As the forces subsequently marched from the Sas of Ghent towards the Flemish coast there was no rising of the people in their favour, and although Maurice had issued distinct orders that the peasantry were to be dealt with gently and justly, yet they found neither peasants nor villagers to deal with at all. The whole population on their line of march had betaken themselves to the woods, except the village sexton of Jabbeke and his wife, who were too old to run. Lurking in the thickets and marshes, the peasants fell upon all stragglers from the army and murdered them without mercy—so difficult is it in times of civil war to make human brains pervious to the light of reason. The stadholder and his soldiers came to liberate their brethren of the same race, and speaking the same language, from abject submission to a foreign despotism. The Flemings had but to speak a word, to lift a finger, and all the Netherlands, self-governed, would coalesce into one independent confederation of States, strong enough to defy all the despots of Europe. Alas! the benighted victims of superstition hugged their chains, and preferred the tyranny under which their kindred had been tortured, burned,

and buried alive for half-a-century long, to the possibility of a single Calvinistic conventicle being opened in any village of obedient Flanders. So these excellent children of Philip and the pope, whose language was as unintelligible to them as it was to Peruvians or Iroquois, lay in wait for the men who spoke their own mother tongue, and whose veins were filled with their own blood, and murdered them, as a sacred act of duty. Retaliation followed as a matter of course, so that the invasion of Flanders, in this early stage of its progress, seemed not likely to call forth very fraternal feelings between the two families of Netherlanders.

The army was in the main admirably well supplied, but there was a deficiency of drink. The water as they advanced became brackish and intolerably bad, and there was great difficulty in procuring any substitute. At Male three cows were given for a pot of beer, and more of that refreshment might have been sold at the same price, had there been any sellers.

On the 30th June Maurice marched from Oudenburg, intending to strike a point called Niewendam—a fort in the neighbourhood of Nieuport—and so to march along the walls of that city and take up his position immediately in its front. He found the ground, however, so marshy and impracticable as he advanced, that he was obliged to countermarch, and to spend that night on the downs between forts Isabella and St. Albert.

On the 1st July he resumed his march, and passing a bridge over a small stream at a place called Leffingen, laying down a road as he went with sods and sand,* and throwing bridges over streams and swamps, he arrived in the forenoon before Nieuport. The fleet had reached the roadstead the same morning. 1 July.

This was a strong, well-built, and well-fortified little city, situate half-a-league from the sea coast on low, plashy ground. At high water it was a seaport, for a stream or creek of very insignificant dimensions was then sufficiently filled by the tide to admit vessels of considerable burthen. This haven

was immediately taken possession of by the stadholder, and two-thirds of his army were thrown across to the western side of the water, the troops remaining on the Ostend side being by a change of arrangement now under command of Count Ernest.

Thus the army which had come to surprise Nieuport had, after accomplishing a distance of nearly forty miles in thirteen days, at last arrived before that place. Yet there was no more expeditious or energetic commander in Christendom than Maurice, nor troops better trained in marching and fighting than his well-disciplined army.

It is now necessary to cast a glance towards the interior of Flanders, in order to observe how the archduke conducted himself in this emergency. So soon as the news of the landing of the States' army at the port of Ghent reached the sovereign's ears, he awoke from the delusion that danger was impending on his eastern border, and lost no time in assembling such troops as could be mustered from far and near to protect the western frontier. Especially he despatched messengers well charged with promises, to confer with the authorities of the "Italian Republic" at Diest and Thionville. He appealed to them in behalf of the holy Catholic religion, he sought to arouse their loyalty to himself and the Infanta Isabella—daughter of the great and good Philip II., once foremost of earthly potentates, and now eminent among the saints of heaven—by whose fiat he and his wife had now become legitimate sovereigns of all the Netherlands. And those mutineers responded with unexpected docility. Eight hundred foot soldiers and six hundred cavalry men came forth at the first summons, making but two conditions in addition to the stipulated payment when payment should be possible—that they should be commanded by their own chosen officers, and that they should be placed in the first rank in the impending conflict. The example spread. Other detachments of mutineers in various strongholds, scenting the battle from afar, came in with offers to serve in the campaign on similar terms. Before the last week

of June the archduke had a considerable army on foot. On the 29th of that month, accompanied by the Infanta, 29 June, 1600. he reviewed a force of ten thousand foot and nearly two thousand cavalry in the immediate vicinity of Ghent. He addressed them in a few stirring words, reminding them of their duty to the Church and to himself, and assuring them—as commanders of every nation and every age are wont to assure their troops at the eve of every engagement—that the cause in which they were going forth to battle was the most sacred and inspiring for which human creatures could possibly lay down their lives. Isabella, magnificently attired, and mounted on a white palfrey, galloped along the lines, and likewise made an harangue. She spoke to the soldiers as "her lions," promised them boundless rewards in this world and the next, as the result of the great victory which they were now about to gain over the infidels; while as to their wages, she vowed that, rather than they should remain unpaid, she would sacrifice all her personal effects, even to the plate from which she ate her daily bread, and to the jewels which she wore in her ears.

Thousands of hoarse voices greeted the eloquence of the archdukes with rude acclamations, while the discharge of arquebus and volleys of cannon testified to the martial ardour with which the troops were inspired; none being more enthusiastic than the late mutineers. The army marched at once, under many experienced leaders—Villars, Zapena, and Avalos among the most conspicuous. The command of the artillery was entrusted to Velasco; the marshal-general of the camp was Frederic van den Berg, in place of the superannuated Peter Ernest; while the Admiral of Arragon, Francisco de Mendoza, "terror of Germany and of Christendom," a little man with flowing locks, long hooked nose, and a sinister glance from his evil black eyes, was general of the cavalry. The admiral had not displayed very extraordinary genius in his recent campaigning in the Rhenish duchies, but his cruelty had certainly been conspicuous. Not even Alva could have accomplished more murders and

other outrages in the same space of time than had been perpetrated by the Spanish troops during the infamous winter of 1598–9. The assassination of Count Broeck at his own castle had made more stir than a thousand other homicides of nameless wretches at the same period had done, because the victim had been a man of rank and large possessions, but it now remained to be seen whether Mendoza was to gain fresh laurels of any kind in the battle which was probably impending.

On the 1st of July the archduke came before Oudenburg. Not a soul within that fortress nor in Ostend dreamed of an enemy within twenty miles of them, nor had it been supposed possible that a Spanish army could take the field for many weeks to come. The States-General at Ostend were complacently waiting for the first bulletin from Maurice announcing his capture of Nieuport and his advance upon Dunkirk, according to the program so succinctly drawn up for him, and meantime were holding meetings and drawing up comfortable protocols with great regularity. Colonel Piron, on his part, who had been left with several companies of veterans to hold Oudenburg and the other forts, and to protect the rear of the invading army, was accomplishing that object by permitting a large portion of his force to be absent on foraging parties and general marauding. When the enemy came before Oudenburg they met with no resistance. The fort was surrendered at once, and with it fell the lesser sconces of Breedene, Snaaskerk, and Plassendaal—all but the more considerable fort St. Albert. The archduke, not thinking it advisable to delay his march by the reduction of this position, and having possession of all the other fortifications around Ostend, determined to push forward next morning at daybreak. He had granted favourable terms of surrender to the various garrisons, which, however, did not prevent them from being dearly every man of them immediately butchered in cold blood.

Thus were these strong and well-manned redoubts, by which Prince Maurice had hoped to impede for many days the

march of a Spanish army—should a Spanish army indeed be able to take the field at all—already swept off in an hour. Great was the dismay in Ostend when Colonel Piron and a few stragglers brought the heavy news of discomfiture and massacre to the high and mighty States-General in solemn meeting assembled.

Meanwhile, the States' army before Nieuport, not dreaming of any pending interruption to their labours, proceeded in a steady but leisurely manner to invest the city. Maurice occupied himself in tracing the lines of encampment and entrenchment, and ordered a permanent bridge to be begun across the narrowest part of the creek, in order that the two parts of his army might not be so dangerously divided from each other as they now were, at high water, by the whole breadth and depth of the harbour. Evening came on before much had been accomplished on this first day of the siege. It was scarcely dusk when a messenger, much exhausted and terrified, made his appearance at Count Ernest's tent. He was a straggler who had made his escape from Oudenburg, and he brought the astounding intelligence that the archduke had already possession of that position and of all the other forts. Ernest instantly jumped into a boat and had himself rowed, together with the messenger, to the headquarters of Prince Maurice on the other side of the river. The news was as unexpected as it was alarming. Here was the enemy, who was supposed incapable of mischief for weeks to come, already in the field, and planted directly on their communications with Ostend. Retreat, if retreat were desired, was already impossible, and as to surprising the garrison of Nieuport and so obtaining that stronghold as a basis for further aggressive operations, it is very certain that if any man in Flanders was more surprised than another at that moment it was Prince Maurice himself. He was too good a soldier not to see at a glance that if the news brought by the straggler were true, the whole expedition was already a failure, and that, instead of a short siege and an easy victory, a great battle was to be fought upon the sands of Nieuport, in which defeat was

destruction of the whole army of the republic, and very possibly of the republic itself.

The stadholder hesitated. He was prone in great emergencies to hesitate at first, but immovable when his resolution was taken. Vere, who was asleep in his tent, was sent for and consulted. Most of the generals were inclined to believe that the demonstrations at Oudenburg, which had been so successful, were merely a bravado of Rivas, the commander of the permanent troops in that district, which were comparatively insignificant in numbers. Vere thought otherwise. He maintained that the archduke was already in force within a few hours' march of them, as he had always supposed would be the case. His opinion was not shared by the rest, and he went back to his truckle-bed, feeling that a brief repose was necessary for the heavy work which would soon be upon him. At midnight the Englishman was again called from his slumbers. Another messenger, sent directly from the States-General at Ostend, had made his way to the stadholder. This time there was no possibility of error, for Colonel Piron had sent the accord with the garrison commanders of the forts which had been so shamefully violated, and which bore the signature of the archduke.

It was now perfectly obvious that a pitched battle was to be fought before another sunset, and most anxious were the deliberations in that brief midsummer's night. The dilemma was as grave a one as commander-in-chief had ever to solve in a few hours. A portentous change had come over the prospects of the commonwealth since the arrival of these despatches. But a few hours before, and never had its destiny seemed so secure, its attitude more imposing. The little republic, which Spain had been endeavouring forty years long to subjugate, had already swept every Spanish soldier out of its territory, had repeatedly carried fire and sword into Spain itself, and even into its distant dependencies, and at that moment—after effecting in a masterly manner the landing of a great army in the very face of the man who claimed to be sovereign of all the Netherlands, and after marching at ease

through the heart of his territory—was preparing a movement, with every prospect of success, which should render the hold of that sovereign on any portion of Netherland soil as uncertain and shifting as the sands on which the States army was now encamped.

The son of the proscribed and murdered rebel stood at the head of as powerful and well-disciplined an army as had ever been drawn up in line of battle on that blood-stained soil. The daughter of the man who had so long oppressed the provinces might soon be a fugitive from the land over which she had so recently been endowed with perpetual sovereignty. And now in an instant these visions were fading like a mirage.

The archduke, whom poverty and mutiny were to render powerless against invasion, was following close up upon the heels of the triumphant army of the stadholder. A decision was immediately necessary. The siege of Nieuport was over before it had begun. Surprise had failed, assault for the moment was impossible, the manner how best to confront the advancing foe the only question.

Vere advised that the whole army should at once be concentrated and led without delay against the archduke before he should make further progress.[3] The advice involved an outrageous impossibility, and it seems incredible that it could have been given in good faith ; still more amazing that its rejection by Maurice should have been bitterly censured. Two-thirds of the army lay on the other side of the harbour, and it was high water at about three o'clock. While they were deliberating, the sea was rising, and, so soon as daybreak should make any evolutions possible, they would be utterly prohibited during several hours by the inexorable tide. More time would be consumed by the attempt to construct temporary bridges (for of course little progress had been made in the stone bridge hardly begun) or to make use of boats than in waiting for the falling of the water, and, should the enemy make his appearance while they were

[3] See the note on Sir Francis Vere at the end of this chapter.

engaged in such confusing efforts, the army would be hopelessly lost.

Maurice, against the express advice of Vere, decided to send his cousin Ernest, with the main portion of the force established on the right bank of the harbour, in search of the archduke, for the purpose of holding him in check long enough to enable the rest of the army to cross the water when the tide should serve. The enemy, it was now clear, would advance by precisely the path over which the States' army had marched that morning. Ernest was accordingly instructed to move with the greatest expedition in order to seize the bridge at Leffingen before the archduke should reach the deep, dangerous, and marshy river, over which it was the sole passage to the downs. Two thousand infantry, being the Scotch regiment of Edmonds and the Zeelanders of Van der Noot, four squadrons of Dutch cavalry, and two pieces of artillery composed the force with which Ernest set forth at a little before dawn on his hazardous but heroic enterprise.

With a handful of troops he was to make head against an army, and the youth accepted the task in the cheerful spirit of self-sacrifice which characterized his house. Marching as rapidly as the difficult ground would permit, he had the disappointment, on approaching the fatal point at about eight o'clock, to see the bridge at Leffingen in the possession of the enemy. Maurice had sent off a messenger early that morning with a letter marked post haste (*cito, cito*) to Ostend ordering up some four hundred cavalry-men then stationed in that city under Piron and Bruges, to move up to the support of Ernest, and to destroy the bridge and dams at Leffingen before the enemy should arrive. That letter, which might have been so effective, was delivered, as it subsequently appeared, exactly ten days after it was written.[4] The States, of their own authority, had endeavoured to send out those riders towards the scene of action, but it was with great difficulty that they could be got into the saddle at all, and they positively refused to go further than St. Albert fort.

[4] Duyck, ii. 662.

What course should he now pursue? He had been sent to cut the archduke's road. He had failed. Had he remained in his original encampment his force would have been annihilated by the overwhelming numbers of the enemy so soon as they reached the right bank of Nieuport haven, while Maurice could have only looked hopelessly on from the opposite shore. At least nothing worse than absolute destruction could befal him now. Should he accept a combat of six or eight to one the struggle would be hopeless, but the longer it was protracted the better it would be for his main army, engaged at that very moment as he knew in crossing the haven with the ebbing tide. Should he retreat, it might be possible for him to escape into Fort Albert or even Ostend, but to do so would be to purchase his own safety and that of his command at the probable sacrifice of the chief army of the republic. Ernest hesitated but an instant. Coming within carbine-shot of the stream, where he met his cavalry which had been sent forward at full speed, in the vain hope of seizing or destroying the bridge before it should be too late, he took up a position behind a dyke, upon which he placed his two field-pieces, and formed his troops in line of battle exactly across the enemy's path. On the right he placed the regiment of Scots. On the left was Van der Noot's Zeeland infantry, garnished with four companies of riders under Risoir, which stood near St. Mary's church. The passage from the stream to the downs was not more than a hundred yards wide, being skirted on both sides by a swamp. Here Ernest with his two thousand men awaited the onset of the archduke's army. He was perfectly aware that it was a mere question of time, but he was sure that his preparations must interpose a delay to the advance of the Spaniards, should his troops, as he felt confident, behave themselves as they had always done, and that the delay would be of inestimable value to his friends at the haven of Nieuport.

The archduke paused; for he, too, could not be certain, on observing the resolute front thus presented to him, that he was not about to engage the whole of the States' army. The

doubt was but of short duration, however, and the onset was made. Ernest's artillery fired four volleys into the advancing battalions with such effect as to stagger them for a moment, but they soon afterwards poured over the dyke in overwhelming numbers, easily capturing the cannon. The attack began upon Ernest's left, and Risoir's cavalry, thinking that they should be cut off from all possibility of retreat into Fort St. Albert, turned their backs in the most disgraceful manner, without even waiting for the assault. Galloping around the infantry on the left they infected the Zeelanders with their own cowardice. Scarcely a moment passed before Van der Noot's whole regiment was running away as fast as the troopers, while the Scots on the right hesitated not for an instant to follow their example. Even before the expected battle had begun, one of those hideous and unaccountable panics which sometimes break out like a moral pestilence to destroy all the virtue of an army, and to sweep away the best-considered schemes of a general, had spread through Ernest's entire force. So soon as the demi-cannon had discharged their fourth volley, Scots, Zeelanders, Walloons, pikemen, musketeers, and troopers, possessed by the demon of cowardice, were running like a herd of swine to throw themselves into the sea. Had they even kept the line of the downs in the direction of the fort many of them might have saved their lives, although none could have escaped disgrace. But the Scots, in an ecstasy of fear, throwing away their arms as they fled, ran through the waters behind the dyke, skimmed over the sands at full speed, and never paused till such as survived the sabre and musket of their swift pursuers had literally drowned themselves in the ocean. Almost every man of them was slain or drowned. All the captains—Stuart, Barclay, Murray, Kilpatrick, Michael, Nesbit—with the rest of the company officers, doing their best to rally the fugitives, were killed. The Zeelanders, more cautious in the midst of their panic, or perhaps knowing better the nature of the country, were more successful in saving their necks. Not more than a hundred and fifty of Van der Noot's regi-

ment were killed, while such of the cavalry of Bruges and Piron as had come to the neighbourhood of Fort Albert, not caring to trust themselves to the shelter of that redoubt, now fled as fast as their horses' legs would carry them, and never pulled bridle till they found themselves in Ostend. And so beside themselves with panic were these fugitives, and so virulent was the contagion, that it was difficult to prevent the men who had remained in the fort from joining in the flight towards Ostend. Many of them indeed threw themselves over the walls and were sabred by the enemy when they might have been safe within the fortifications. Had these cavalry companies of Bruges and Piron been even tolerably self-possessed, had they concentrated themselves in the fort instead of yielding to the delirium which prompted them to participate in their comrades' flight, they would have had it entirely in their power, by making an attack, or even the semblance of an attack, by means of a sudden sally from the fort, to have saved, not the battle indeed, but a large number of lives. But the panic was hopeless and universal, and countless fugitives scrambling by the fort were shot in a leisurely manner by a comparative few of the enemy as easily as the rabbits which swarmed in those sands were often knocked down in multitudes by half-a-dozen sportsmen.

And thus a band of patriots, who were not cowards by nature, and who had often played the part of men, had horribly disgraced themselves, and were endangering the very existence of their country, already by mistaken councils brought within the jaws of death. The glory of Thermopylæ might have hung for ever over that bridge of Leffingen. It was now a pass of infamy, perhaps of fatal disaster. The sands were covered with weapons—sabre, pike, and arquebus—thrown away by almost every soldier as he fled to save the life which after all was sacrificed. The artillery, all the standards and colours, all the baggage and ammunition, every thing was lost. No viler panic, no more complete defeat was ever recorded. Such at half-past eight in the

morning was that memorable Sunday of the 2nd July, 1600, big with the fate of the Dutch republic—the festival of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary, always thought of happy augury for Spanish arms.

Thus began the long expected battle of Nieuport. At least a thousand of the choicest troops of the stadholder were slain, while the Spanish had hardly lost a man.[5]

The archduke had annihilated his enemy,[6] had taken his artillery and thirty flags. In great exultation he despatched a messenger to the Infanta at Ghent, informing her that he had entirely defeated the advance-guard of the States' army, and that his next bulletin would announce his complete triumph and the utter overthrow of Maurice, who had now no means of escape. He stated also that he would very soon send the rebel stadholder himself to her as a prisoner. The Infanta, much pleased with the promise, observed to her attendants that she was curious to see how Nassau would conduct himself when he should be brought a captive into her presence. As to the Catholic troops, they were informed by the archduke that after the complete victory which they

[5] There can be no doubt whatever as to the rout of Leffingen. There was no fight at all. The journal of Antony Duyck and the accounts of Meteren, Bor, and other chroniclers entirely agree with the most boastful narratives of the Spaniards. Everard van Reyd to be sure stoutly maintains that the troops of Ernest fought to the uttermost ("zum euszersten gefochten"), and that hardly a whole spear was found in the hands of any of the dead on the field. Nor a broken one either, he might have added. It is a pity that the army had not been as stanch as the secretary and chronicler. But Reyd was not on the field nor near it, and there is not a word in Ernest's private letters to conflict with the minute and unvarnished statements of Duyck. See also the excellent note of Captain Mulder on pp. 668, 669, part ii. of his admirable edition of Duyck's journal.

The confessor of the archduke, Fray Inigo de Brizuelas, was as enthusiastic on his side as the privy counsellor of Lewis William. The troops of the archduke, he says, attacked Ernest and in one moment killed 1800 to 2000 men without losing a man themselves—"Elles mirent à mort en un moment 1800 à 2000 hommes s'emparirent de deux pieces d'artillerie et de plusieurs drapeaux sans avoir subi aucune perte . . . . . On esperait généralement que ce jour mettrait fin aux guerres de Flandre." (! !)

Substance d'une lettre écrite de Bruges le 13 Juillet, 1600, par Fray J. de Brizuelas à unseigneur de la cour à Madrid et reposant en copie aux fol. 45–48 du vol. H. 49, (Varias Consultas en tiempo de los reyes Austriacos) appartenant à la Bibliothèque Natl à Madrid. MS. kindly communicated to me by M. Gachard.

[6] "Qui fut si vivement chargée qu'elle y demeura toute" are the words of the archduke writing on the 4th July from Ghent to his council of state. (MS. Archives of Belgium.)

were that day to achieve, not a man should be left alive save Maurice and his brother Frederic Henry. These should be spared to grace the conqueror's triumph, but all else should be put to the sword.[7]

Meantime artillery thundered, bonfires blazed, and bells rang their merriest peals in Ghent, Bruges, and the other obedient cities as the news of the great victory spread through the land.

When the fight was done the archduke called a council of war. It was a grave question whether the army should at once advance in order to complete the destruction of the enemy that day, or pause for an interval that the troops fatigued with hard marching and with the victorious combat in which they just had been engaged, should recover their full strength. That the stadholder was completely in their power was certain. The road to Ostend was barred, and Nieuport would hold him at bay, now that the relieving army was close upon his heels. All that was necessary in order to annihilate his whole force, was that they should entrench themselves for the night on the road which he must cross. He would then be obliged to assault their works with troops inferior in number to theirs and fatigued by the march. Should he remain where he was he would soon be starved into submission, and would be obliged to surrender his whole army. On the other hand, by advancing now, in the intolerable heat of a July sun over the burning and glaring sands, the troops already wearied would arrive on the field of battle utterly exhausted, and would be obliged to attack an enemy freshly and cheerfully awaiting them on ground of his own selection.

Moreover it was absolutely certain that Fort Albert would not hold an hour if resolutely assaulted in the midst of the panic of Ernest's defeat, and, with its capture, the annihilation of Maurice was certain.

Meantime the three thousand men under Velasco, who had been detached to protect the rear, would arrive to rein-

[7] Le Petit on the authority of prisoners. De la Pise.

force the archduke's main army, should he pause until the next day.

These arguments, which had much logic in them, were strongly urged by Zapena, a veteran marshal of the camp who had seen much service, and whose counsels were usually received with deference. But on this occasion commanders and soldiers were hot for following up their victory. They cared nothing for the numbers of their enemy, they cried, "The more infidels the greater glory in destroying them."[8] Delay might after all cause the loss of the prize, it was eagerly shouted The archduke ought to pray that the sun might stand still for him that morning, as for Joshua in the vale of Ajalon. The foe seeing himself entrapped, with destruction awaiting him, was now skulking towards his ships, which still offered him the means of escape. Should they give him time he would profit by their negligence, and next morning when they reached Nieuport, the birds would be flown. Especially the leaders of the mutineers of Diest and Thionville were hoarse with indignation at the proposed delay. They had not left their brethren, they shouted, nor rallied to the archduke's banner in order to sit down and dig in the sand like ploughmen. There was triumph for the Holy Church, there was the utter overthrow of the heretic army, there was rich booty to be gathered, all these things were within their reach if they now advanced and smote the rebels while, confused and panic-stricken, they were endeavouring to embark in their ships.

While these vehement debates were at the hottest, sails were descried in the offing ; for the archduke's forces already stood upon the edge of the downs. First one ship, then another and another, moved steadily along the coast, returning from Nieuport in the direction of Ostend.

This was more than could be borne. It was obvious that the rebels were already making their escape, and it was urged upon the cardinal that probably Prince Maurice and the other chieftains were on board one of those very vessels, and were giving him the slip. With great expedition it

[8] "Quanto mas Moros tanto mas ganancias."—De la Pise.

would still be possible to overtake them before the main body could embark, and the attack might yet be made at the most favourable moment. Those white sails gleaming in the distance were more eloquent than Zapena or any other advocate of delay, and the order was given to advance. And it was exactly at this period that it still lay within the power of the States' cavalry at Ostend to partially redeem their character, and to render very effective service. Had four or five hundred resolute troopers hung upon the rear of the Spanish army now, as it moved toward Nieuport, they might, by judiciously skirmishing, advancing and retreating according to circumstances, have caused much confusion, and certainly have so harassed the archduke as to compel the detachment of a very considerable force of his own cavalry to protect himself against such assaults. But the terror was an enduring one. Those horsemen remained paralyzed and helpless, and it was impossible for the States, with all their commands or entreaties, to induce them to mount and ride even a half mile beyond the city gates.

While these events had been occurring in the neighbourhood of Ostend, Maurice had not been idle at Nieuport. No sooner had Ernest been despatched on his desperate errand than his brother Lewis Gunther was ordered by the stadholder to get on horseback and ride through the quarters of the army. On the previous afternoon there had been so little thought of an enemy that large foraging parties had gone out from camp in all directions, and had not returned. Lewis gave notice that a great battle was to be expected on the morrow, instead of the tranquil commencement of a leisurely siege, and that therefore no soul was henceforth to leave the camp, while a troop of horse was despatched at the first gleam of daylight to scour the country in search of all the stragglers. Maurice had no thought of retreating, and his first care was to bring his army across the haven. The arrangements were soon completed, but it was necessary to wait until nearly low water. Soon after eight o'clock Count Lewis began to cross with eight squadrons of cavalry, and

partly swimming, partly wading, effected the passage in safety. The advanced guard of infantry, under Sir Francis Vere—consisting of two thousand six hundred Englishmen, and two thousand eight hundred Frisians, with some companies of horse, followed by the battalia under Solms, and the rearguard under Tempel—then slowly and with difficulty moved along the same dangerous path with the water as high as their armpits, and often rising nearly over their heads. Had the archduke not been detained near the bridge of Leffingen by Ernest's Scotchmen and Zeelanders during three or four precious hours that morning ; had he arrived, as he otherwise might have done, just as the States' army—horse, foot, and artillery—was floundering through that treacherous tide, it would have fared ill for the stadholder and the republic. But the devotion of Ernest had at least prevented the attack of the archduke until Maurice and his men stood on dry land.

Dripping from head to foot, but safe and sound, the army had at last reached the beach at Nieuport. Vere had refused his soldiers permission to denude themselves in crossing of their shoes and lower garments. There was no time for that, he said, and they would either earn new clothes for themselves that day, or never need doublet and hose again any more in the world. Some hours had elapsed before the tedious and difficult crossing of infantry, cavalry, artillery, and munition trains had been accomplished.

Lewis Gunther, with eight squadrons of picked cavalry, including his own company, Maurice's own, Frederic Henry's own, with Batenburg's arquebus-men, and other veterans, was first to place himself in battle order on the beach. His squadrons in iron corslet and morion, and armed with lances, carbines, and sabres, stretched across from the water to the downs. He had not been long stationed there when he observed that far away in the direction of Ostend the beach was growing black with troops. He believed them at first to be his brother Ernest and his forces returning victorious from their hazardous expedition, but he was soon undeceived.

A couple of troopers from Ostend came spurring full gallop along the strand, and almost breathless with dismay, announced that it was the whole army of the archduke advancing in line of battle. They were instantly sent to the rear, without being allowed to speak further, in order that they might deliver their message in private to the commander-in-chief. And most terrible were the tidings to which Maurice now listened in very secret audience. Ernest was utterly defeated, his command cut to pieces, the triumphant foe advancing rapidly, and already in full sight. The stadholder heard the tale without flinching, and having quietly ordered the messengers upon their lives not to open their lips on the subject to living soul, sent them securely guarded in a boat on board one of the war-ships in the offing. With perfect cheerfulness he then continued his preparations, consulting with Vere, on whom he mainly relied for the marshalling of the army in the coming conflict. Undecided as he had sometimes shown himself, he was resolute now. He called no council of war, for he knew not how much might be known or suspected of the disaster already sustained, and he had fully made up his mind as to the course to be pursued. He had indeed taken a supreme resolution. Entirely out of his own breast, without advising with any man, he calmly gave directions that every war-ship, transport, barge, or wherry should put to sea at once. As the tide had now been long on the flood, the few vessels that had been aground within the harbour were got afloat, and the whole vast, almost innumerable armada, was soon standing out to sea. No more heroic decision was ever taken by fighting man.

Sir Francis gave advice that entrenchments should be thrown up on the north-east, and that instead of advancing towards the enemy they should await his coming, and refuse the battle that day if possible. The Englishman, not aware of the catastrophe at Leffingen, which Maurice had locked up in his own breast, was now informed by the stadholder that there were to be no entrenchments that day but those of pike and arquebus. It was not the fault of Maurice that

the fate of the commonwealth had been suspended on a silken thread that morning, but he knew that but one of two issues was possible. They must fight their way through the enemy back to Ostend, or perish, every man of them. The possibility of surrender did not enter his mind, and he felt that it was better to hasten the action before the news of Ernest's disaster should arrive to chill the ardour of the troops.[9]

Meantime Lewis Gunther and his cavalry had been sitting motionless upon their horses on the beach. The enemy was already in full view, and the young general, most desirous to engage in a preliminary skirmish, sent repeated messages to the stadholder for permission to advance. Presently Sir Francis Vere rode to the front, to whom he eagerly urged his request that the infantry of the vanguard might be brought up at once to support him.[10] On the contrary the English general advised that the cavalry should fall back to the infantry, in order to avoid a premature movement. Lewis strongly objected to this arrangement, on the ground that the mere semblance of retreat, thus upon the eve of battle, would discourage all the troops. But he was over-ruled, for Maurice had expressly enjoined upon his cousin that morning to defer in all things to the orders of Vere. These eight squadrons of horse accordingly shifted their position, and were now placed close to the edge of the sea, on the left flank of the vanguard, which Vere had drawn up across the beach and in the downs. On the edge of the downs, on the narrow slip of hard sand above high-water mark, and on Vere's right, Maurice had placed a battery of six demi-cannon.

Behind the advance was the battalia, or centre, under command of that famous fighter, George Everard Solms, consisting of Germans, Swiss, French, and Walloons. The "New Beggars," as the Walloons were called, who had so recently surrendered the forts of Crevecœur and St. Andrew, and gone over from the archduke's service to the army of

[9] That Maurice concealed from Vere the news of the defeat at Leffingen is expressly stated by Antony Duyck. [10] See note on Vere.

the States, were included in this division, and were as eager to do credit to their new chief as were the mutineers in the archduke's army to merit the approbation of their sovereign.

The rearguard under Tempel was made up, like the other divisions, of the blended nationalities of German, Briton, Hollander, and Walloon, and, like the others, was garnished at each flank with heavy cavalry.

The Spanish army, after coming nearly within cannon-shot of their adversary, paused. It was plain that the States' troops were not in so great a panic as the more sanguine advisers of the archduke had hoped. They were not cowering among the shipping, preparing to escape. Still less had any portion of them already effected their retreat in those vessels, a few of which had so excited the enemy's ardour when they came in sight. It was obvious that a great struggle, in which the forces were very evenly balanced, was now to be fought out upon those sands. It was a splendid tournament—a great duel for life and death between the champions of the Papacy and of Protestantism, of the Republic and of absolutism, that was to be fought out that midsummer's day. The lists were closed. The trumpet signal for the fray would soon be blown.

The archduke, in Milanese armour, on a wonderfully beautiful snow-white Spanish stallion, moved in the centre of his army. He wore no helmet, that his men might the more readily recognize him as he rode gallantly to and fro, marshalling, encouraging, exhorting the troops. Never before had he manifested such decided military talent, combined with unquestionable personal valour, as he had done since this campaign began. Friend and foe agreed that day that Albert fought like a lion. He was at first well seconded by Mendoza, who led the van, and by Villars, La Bourlotte, Avalos, Zapena, and many other officers of note. The mutinous Spanish and Italian cavalry, combined with a few choice squadrons of Walloon and German horse, were placed in front and on the flanks. They were under the special

supervision of the admiral, who marshalled their squadrons and directed their charging, although mounted on a hackney himself, and not intending to participate in the action. Then came the battalia and rear, crowding very closely upon each other.

Face to face with them stood the republican host, drawn up in great solid squares of infantry, their standards waving above each closely planted clump of pikemen, with the musketeers fringing their skirts, while the iron-clad ponderous cavalry of Count Lewis and Marcellus Bax, in black casque and corslet, were in front, restlessly expecting the signal for the onset. The volunteers of high rank who were then serving on the staff of the stadholder—the Duke of Holstein, the Prince of Anhalt, two young Counts Solms, and others—had been invited and even urged to abandon the field while there was yet time for setting them on board the fleet. Especially it was thought desirable that young Frederic Henry, a mere boy, on whom the hopes of the Orange-Nassau house would rest if Maurice fell in the conflict, should be spared the fate which seemed hanging over the commonwealth and her defenders. But the son of William the Silent implored his brother with clasped hands not to send him from his side at that moment, so that Maurice granted his prayer, and caused him to be provided with a complete suit of armour. Thus in company with young Coligny—a lad of his own age, and like himself a grandson of the great admiral—the youth who was one day to play so noble a part on the stage of the world's affairs was now to be engaged in his first great passage of arms. No one left the field but Sir Robert Sidney, who had come over from Ostend, from irrepressible curiosity to witness the arrangements, but who would obviously have been guilty of unpardonable negligence had he been absent at such a crisis from the important post of which he was governor for the queen.[11]

[11] Duyck, however, with much injustice, as it would seem, accuses Sidney (whom he calls "Philip Sidney"!) of cowardice; stating that he paid a large sum to obtain a vessel in which to make his escape, and that he was obliged to hear many insulting observations on his flight.

The arena of the conflict seemed elaborately prepared by the hand of nature. The hard, level, sandy beach, swept clean and smooth by the ceaseless action of the tides, stretched out far as the eye could reach in one long, bold, monotonous line. Like the whole coast of Flanders and of Holland, it seemed drawn by a geometrical rule, not a cape, cove, or estuary breaking the perfect straightness of the design. On the right, just beyond high-water mark, the downs, fantastically heaped together like a mimic mountain chain, or like tempestuous ocean-waves suddenly changed to sand, rolled wild and confused, but still in a regularly parallel course with the line of the beach. They seemed a barrier thrown up to protect the land from being bitten quite away by the ever-restless and encroaching sea. Beyond the downs, which were seven hundred yards in width, extended a level tract of those green fertile meadows, artificially drained, which are so characteristic a feature of the Netherland landscapes, the stream which ran from Ostend towards the town of Nieuport flowing sluggishly through them. It was a bright warm midsummer day. The waves of the German Ocean came lazily rolling in upon the crisp yellow sand, the surf breaking with its monotonous music at the very feet of the armies. A gentle south-west breeze was blowing, just filling the sails of more than a thousand ships in the offing, which moved languidly along the sparkling sea. It was an atmosphere better befitting a tranquil holiday than the scene of carnage which seemed approaching.

Maurice of Nassau, in complete armour, rapier in hand, with the orange-plumes waving from his helmet and the orange-scarf across his breast, rode through the lines, briefly addressing his soldiers with martial energy. Pointing to the harbour of Nieuport behind them, now again impassable with the flood, to the ocean on the left where rode the fleet,

"De heere Philps (sic) Sidnei tsij uyt vrese ofte anders ont vont hem van daer ende geraeckte met groote moeite ende naer veel schampere woorden hem bij eenigen gegeven t'scheepe selfs met presentatie van geld ende voer doen wech, *niet dervende in den slach blijven.*"—Journaal, ii. 667.

carrying with it all hope of escape by sea, and to the army of the archduke in front, almost within cannon-range, he simply observed that they had no possible choice between victory and death. They must either utterly overthrow the Spanish army, he said, or drink all the waters of the sea. Either drowning or butchery was their doom if they were conquered, for no quarter was to be expected from their unscrupulous and insolent foe. He was there to share their fate, to conquer or to perish with them, and from their tried valour and from the God of battles he hoped a more magnificent victory than had ever before been achieved in this almost perpetual war for independence. The troops, perfectly enthusiastic, replied with a shout that they were ready to live or die with their chieftain, and eagerly demanded to be led upon the foe. Whether from hope or from desperation they were confident and cheerful. Some doubt was felt as to the Walloons, who had so lately transferred themselves from the archduke's army, but their commander, Marquette, made them all lift up their hands, and swear solemnly to live or die that day at the feet of Prince Maurice.

Two hours long these two armies had stood looking each other in the face. It was near two o'clock when the archduke at last gave the signal to advance. The tide was again almost at the full. Maurice stood firm, awaiting the assault; the enemy slowly coming nearer, and the rising tide as steadily lapping away all that was left of the hard beach which fringed the rugged downs. Count Lewis chafed with impatience as it became each moment more evident that there would be no beach left for cavalry fighting, while in the downs the manœuvring of horse was entirely impossible. Meantime, by command of Vere, all those sandy hillocks and steeps had been thickly sown with musketeers and pikemen. Arquebus-men and carabineers were planted in every hollow, while on the highest and most advantageous elevation two pieces of cannon had been placed by the express direction of Maurice. It seemed obvious that the battle would, after all, be transferred to the downs. Not long before the action

began, a private of the enemy's cavalry was taken, apparently with his own consent, in a very trifling preliminary skirmish. He bragged loudly of the immense force of the archduke, of the great victory already gained over Ernest, with the utter annihilation of his forces, and of the impending destruction of the whole States' army. Strange to say, this was the first intimation received by Count Lewis of that grave disaster,[12] although it had been for some hours known to Maurice. The prisoner was at once gagged, that he might spread his disheartening news no further, but as he persisted by signs and gestures in attempting to convey the information which he had evidently been sent forward to impart, he was shot by command of the stadholder, and so told no further tales.[13]

The enemy had now come very close, and it was the desire of Count Lewis that a couple of companies of horse, in accordance with the commands of Maurice, should charge the cavalry in front, and that after a brief skirmish they should retreat as if panic-stricken behind the advance column, thus decoying the Spanish vanguard in hot pursuit towards the battery upon the edge of the downs.[14] The cannon were then suddenly to open upon them, and during the confusion sure to be created in their ranks, the musketeers, ambushed among the hollows, were to attack them in flank, while the cavalry in one mass should then make a concentrated charge in front. It seemed certain that the effect of this movement would be to hurl the whole of the enemy's advance, horse and foot, back upon his battalia, and thus to break up his army in irretrievable rout. The plan was a sensible one, but it was not ingeniously executed. Before the handful of cavalry had time to make the proposed feint the cannoneers, being unduly excited, and by express command of Sir Francis Vere, fired a volley into the advancing columns of the archduke.[15] This precipitated the action; almost in an

[12] Letters of Lewis Gunther cited at end of the chapter.
[13] H. Wyts, in Bor, IV. Byvoeg, v. Auth. Stakken. Compare Van Wyn op Wagenaar, ix. 37–47. [14] See note on Vere. [15] Ibid.

instant changed its whole character, and defeated the original plan of the republican leader. The enemy's cavalry broke at the first discharge from the battery, and wheeled in considerable disorder, but without panic, quite into and across the downs. The whole army of the archduke, which had already been veering in the same direction, as it advanced, both because the tide was so steadily devouring the even surface of the sands, and because the position of a large portion of the States' forces among the hillocks exposed him to an attack in flank, was now rapidly transferred to the downs. It was necessary for that portion of Maurice's army which still stood on what remained of the beach to follow this movement. A rapid change of front was then undertaken, and—thanks to the careful system of wheeling, marching, and counter-marching in which the army had been educated by William Lewis and Maurice—was executed with less confusion than might have been expected.

But very few companies of infantry now remained on the strip of beach still bare of the waves, and in the immediate vicinity of the artillery planted high and dry beyond their reach.

The scene was transformed as if by magic, and the battle was now to be fought out in those shifting, uneven hills and hollows, where every soldier stood mid-leg deep in the dry and burning sand. Fortunately for the States' army, the wind was in its back, blowing both sand and smoke into the faces of its antagonists, while the already westering sun glared fiercely in their eyes. Maurice had skilfully made use of the great advantage which accident had given him that day, and his very refusal to advance and to bring on a premature struggle thus stood him in stead in a variety of ways Lewis Gunther was now ordered, with Marcellus Bax and six squadrons of horse, to take position within the belt of pasture-land on the right of the downs. When he arrived there the van of the archduke's infantry had already charged the States' advance under Vere, while just behind and on the side of the musketeers and pikemen a large portion of the enemy's

cavalry was standing stock still on the green. Without waiting for instructions Lewis ordered a charge. It was brilliantly successful. Unheeding a warm salutation in flank from the musketeers as they rode by them, and notwithstanding that they were obliged to take several ditches as they charged, they routed the enemy's cavalry at the first onset, and drove them into panic-stricken flight. Some fled for protection quite to the rear of their infantry, others were hotly pursued across the meadows till they took refuge under the walls of Nieuport. The very success of the attack was nearly fatal however to Count Lewis ; for, unable to restrain the ardour of his troopers in the chase, he found himself cut off from the army with only ten horsemen to support him, and completely enveloped by the enemy. Fortunately Prince Maurice had foreseen the danger, and had ordered all the cavalry to the meadows so soon as the charge was made. Captain Kloet, with a fresh company of mounted carabineers, marked the little squad of States' cavalry careering about in the midst of the Catholics, recognized their leader by the orange-plumes on his casque, and dashed forward to the rescue. Lewis again found himself at the head of his cavalry, but was obliged to wait a long time for the return of the stragglers.

While this brilliant diversion had been enacting as it were on the fringe of the battle, its real bustle and business had been going on in the downs. Just as Lewis made his charge in the pastures, the infantry of the archduke and the advance-guard of the republicans met in deadly shock. More than an hour long they contended with varying success. Musketeers, pikemen, arquebusmen, swordmen, charged, sabred, or shot each other from the various hollows or heights of vantage, plunging knee-deep in the sand, torn and impeded by the prickly broom-plant which grew profusely over the whole surface, and fighting breast to breast and hand to hand in a vast series of individual encounters. Thrice were the Spaniards repulsed in what for a moment seemed absolute rout, thrice they rallied and drove their assailants at push of

pike far beyond their original position ; and again the conquered republicans recovered their energy and smote their adversaries as if the contest were just begun. The tide of battle ebbed and flowed like the waves of the sea, but it would be mere pedantry to affect any technical explanation of its various changes. It was a hot struggle of twenty thousand men, pent up in a narrow space, where the very nature of the ground had made artistic evolutions nearly impracticable.[16] The advance, the battalia, even the rearguard on both sides were mixed together pell-mell, and the downs were soon covered at every step with the dead and dying—Briton, Hollander, Spaniard, Italian, Frisian, Frenchman, Walloon, fighting and falling together, and hotly contesting every inch of those barren sands.

It seemed, said one who fought there, as if the last day of the world had come.

Political and religious hatred, pride of race, remembrance of a half-century of wrongs, hope, fury, and despair ; these were the real elements contending with each other that summer's day. It was a mere trial of ferocity and endurance, not more scientific than a fight between packs of wolves and of bloodhounds.

No doubt the brunt of the conflict fell upon Vere, with his Englishmen and Frisians, for this advance-guard made up nearly one-half of the States' army actually engaged. And most nobly, indefatigably, did the hardy veteran discharge his duty. Having personally superintended almost all the arrangements in the morning, he fought all day in the front, doing the work both of a field-marshal and a corporal.

[16] "Car à raison de la situation du pays, la science et dexterité en laquelle nous presumions d'exceder nostre ennemy (qui estoit la prompte et agile motion de nos bataillons) nous fust entierement rendue infructueuse."—Vere, La Bataille de Nieuport.

"Aussi est il impossible d'observer aucun ordre, sinon par trouppes, vu que la bataille s'est donnée aux dunes où il faict si inegal que tous ont ete pel et mesle, l'arriere-garde ast este aussitost aux mains que l'advant-garde en la bataille."—Ernest Casimir to William Lewis, 20 July, 1600. Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, II. 36.

"Car s'estant les deux armées fort furieusement attaquées il y a esté combattu plus de deux heures main a main et pesle-mesle doubteusement de la victoire," &c. &c.—Letter of the States-General to Queen Elizabeth, 3 July, 1600. (Hague Archives MS.)

He was twice wounded, shot each time through the same leg, yet still fought on as if it were some one else's blood and not his own that was flowing from "those four holes in his flesh." [17] He complained that he was not sufficiently seconded, and that the reserves were not brought up rapidly enough to his support. He was manifestly unjust, for although it could not be doubted that the English and the Frisians did their best, it was equally certain that every part of the army was as staunch as the vanguard. It may be safely asserted that it would not have benefited the cause of the States, had every man been thrown into the fight at one and the same moment.

During this "bloody bit," as Vere called it, between the infantry on both sides, the little battery of two field-pieces planted on the highest hillock of the downs had been very effective. Meantime, while the desperate and decisive struggle had been going on, Lewis Gunther, in the meadow, had again rallied all the cavalry, which, at the first stage of the action, had been dispersed in pursuit of the enemy's horse. Gathering them together in a mass, he besought Prince Maurice to order him to charge. The stadholder bade him pause yet a little longer. The aspect of the infantry fight was not yet, in his opinion, sufficiently favourable. Again and again Lewis sent fresh entreaties, and at last received the desired permission. Placing three picked squadrons in front, the young general made a furious assault upon the Catholic cavalry, which had again rallied and was drawn up very close to the musketeers. Fortune was not so kind to him as at the earlier stage of the combat. The charge was received with dauntless front by the Spanish and Italian horse, while at the same moment the infantry poured a severe fire into their assailants. The advancing squadrons faltered, wheeled back upon the companies following them, and the whole mass of the republican cavalry broke into wild and disorderly retreat. At the same moment the archduke, observing his advantage, threw in his last reserves of infantry, and again there was a desperate charge upon Vere's wearied troops, as

[17] His own expression.

decisive as the counter charge of Lewis's cavalry had been unsuccessful. The English and Frisians, sorely tried during those hours of fighting with superior numbers in the intolerable heat, broke at last and turned their backs upon the foe. Some of them fled panic-stricken quite across the downs and threw themselves into the sea, but the mass retreated in a comparatively orderly manner, being driven from one down to another, and seeking a last refuge behind the battery placed on the high-water line of the beach. In the confusion and panic Sir Francis Vere went down at last. His horse, killed by a stray shot fell with and upon him, and the heroic Englishman would then and there have finished his career—for he would hardly have found quarter from the Spaniards—had not Sir Robert Drury, riding by in the tumult, observed him as he lay almost exhausted in the sand. By his exertion and that of his servant Higham, Vere was rescued from his perilous situation, placed on the crupper of Sir Robert's horse, and so borne off the field.

The current of the retreating and pursuing hosts swept by the spot where Maurice sat on horseback, watching and directing the battle. His bravest and best general, the veteran Vere, had fallen ; his cousin Lewis was now as utterly overthrown as his brother Ernest had been but a few hours before at the fatal bridge of Leffingen ; the whole army, the only army, of the States was defeated, broken, panic-struck ; the Spanish shouts of victory rang on every side. Plainly the day was lost, and with it the republic. In the blackest hour that the Netherland commonwealth had ever known, the fortitude of the stadholder did not desert him. Immoveable as a rock in the torrent he stemmed the flight of his troops. Three squadrons of reserved cavalry, Balen's own, Vere's own, and Cecil's, were all that was left him, and at the head of these he essayed an advance. He seemed the only man on the field not frightened ; and menacing, conjuring, persuading the fugitives for the love of fatherland, of himself and his house, of their own honour, not to disgrace and destroy themselves for ever ; urging that all was not yet lost, and beseech-

ing them at least to take despair for their master, and rather to die like men on the field than to drown like dogs in the sea, he succeeded in rallying a portion of those nearest him.[18] The enemy paused in their mad pursuit, impressed even more than were the States' troops at the dauntless bearing of the prince. It was one of those supreme moments in battle and in history which are sometimes permitted to influence the course of events during a long future. The archduke and his generals committed a grave error in pausing for an instant in their career. Very soon it was too late to repair the fault, for the quick and correct eye of the stadholder saw the point to which the whole battle was tending, and he threw his handful of reserved cavalry, with such of the fugitives as had rallied, straight towards the battery on the beach.

It was arranged that Balen should charge on the strand, Horace Vere through the upper downs, and Cecil along the margin of the beach. Balen rode slowly through the heavy sand, keeping his horses well in wind, and at the moment he touched the beach, rushed with fury upon the enemy's foot near the battery. The moment was most opportune, for the last shot had been fired from the guns, and they had just been nearly abandoned in despair. The onset of Balen was successful: the Spanish infantry, thus suddenly attached, were broken, and many were killed and taken. Cecil and Vere were equally fortunate, so that the retreating English and Frisians began to hold firm again. It was the very crisis of the battle, which up to that instant seemed wholly lost by the republic, so universal was the overthrow and the flight. Some hundred and fifty Frisian pikemen now rallied from their sullen retreat, and drove the enemy off one hillock or dune.

Foiled in their attempt to intercept the backward movement of the States' army and to seize this vital point and the artillery with it, the Spaniards hesitated and were some-

[18] "Je vous asseure que la victoire courut alors grand hazard, car au meme instant toute nostre infanterie se resteroit aussi le grand pas . . . . nostre cavallerie fuioit jusqu'à son Exce *lequel, estoit lors la seule occasion de la victoire,*" &c.—Letters of Lewis Gunther.

what discouraged. Some Zeeland sailors, who had stuck like wax to those demi-cannon during the whole conflict, now promptly obeyed orders to open yet once more upon the victorious foe. At the first volley the Spaniards were staggered, and the sailors with a lively shout of "Ian—fall on," inspired the defeated army with a portion of their own cheerfulness.[19] Others vehemently shouted victory without any reason whatever. At that instant Maurice ordered a last charge by those few cavalry squadrons, while the enemy was faltering under the play of the artillery. It was a forlorn hope, yet such was the shifting fortune of that memorable day that the charge decided the battle. The whole line of the enemy broke, the conquered became the victors, the fugitives quickly rallying and shouting victory almost before they had turned their faces to the foe, became in their turn the pursuers.[20] The Catholic army could no longer be brought to a stand, but fled wildly in every direction, and were shot and stabbed by the republicans as they fled. The Admiral of Arragon fell with his hackney in this last charge. Unwounded, but struggling to extricate himself from his horse that had been killed, he was quickly surrounded by the enemy.

Two Spaniards, Mendo and Villalobos by name, who had recently deserted to the States, came up at the moment and recognised the fallen admiral. They had reason to recognise him, for both had been in his service, and one of them, who was once in immediate household attendance upon him, bore the mark of a wound which he had received from his insolent master. "Admiral, look at this," cried Villalobos, pointing to the scar on his face.[21] The admiral looked and knew his

[19] "Sonder fundament nochtans."—Duyck, ii. 676.

[20] "Et jâ la victoire estait comme nostre et son canon en nostre pouvoir mais nostre cavillerie estant chargée de celle de dudit ennemy se vint sauver en notre arriere-garde, ce que voyant je le fis retourner et chargerent l'ennemy assez prochement. De quoy s'apercevant retourna pour la seconde fois sur eulx quy derechef se vindrent saulver en notre arriere-garde et rompre la plus grande partie d'icelle qui casa que l'infanterie perdit courage de passer oultre et poursuive ce qu'elle avait gagné avec tant d'honneur et lors commenca la retraite," &c.—MS. Letter of Albert before cited.

[21] De la Pise. Meteren.

old servants, and gave his scarf to the one and the hanger of his sword-belt to the other, as tokens that he was their prisoner. Thus his life was saved for heavy ransom, of which those who had actually captured him would receive a very trifling portion. The great prisoner was carried to the rear, where he immediately asked for food and drink, and fell to with an appetite, while the pursuit and slaughter went on in all directions.[22]

The archduke, too, whose personal conduct throughout the day was admirable, had been slightly wounded by a halberd stroke on the ear. This was at an earlier stage of the action, and he had subsequently mounted another horse, exchanged his splendid armour for a plain black harness, over which he wore a shabby scarf. In the confusion of the rout he was hard beset. "Surrender, scoundrel!" cried a Walloon pikeman, seizing his horse by the bridle. But a certain Flemish Captain Kabbeljaw recognising his sovereign and rushing to his rescue, slew his assailant and four others with his own hand.[23] He was at last himself killed, but Albert escaped, and, accompanied by the Duke of Aumale, who was also slightly wounded, by Colonel La Bourlotte, and half a dozen troopers rode for their life in the direction of Bruges. When they reached the fatal bridge of Leffingen, over which the archduke had marched so triumphantly but a few hours before to annihilate Count Ernest's division, he was nearly taken prisoner. A few soldiers, collected from the scattered garrisons, had occupied the position, but knowing nothing of the result of the action in the downs, took to their heels and fled as the little party of cavaliers advanced. Had the commander at Ostend or the States-General promptly sent out a ompany or two so soon as the news of the victory reached them to seize this vital point, the doom of the archduke would have been sealed. Nothing then could have saved him from capture. Fortunately escaping this danger, he now pushed on, and never pulled bridle till he reached Bruges. Thence without pausing he was conveyed to Ghent, where

[22] Meteren. [23] Ibid.

he presented himself to the Infanta. He was not accompanied by the captive Maurice of Nassau, and the curiosity of the princess to know how that warrior would demean himself as a prisoner was not destined on this occasion to be gratified.

Isabella bore the disappointment and the bitter intelligence of the defeat with a stoicism worthy of her departed father. She had already had intimations that the day was going against her army, and had successively received tidings that her husband was killed, was dangerously wounded, was a prisoner; and she was now almost relieved to receive him, utterly defeated, but still safe and sound.

Meantime the mad chase continued along the beach and through the downs. Never was a rout more absolute than that of Albert's army. Never had so brilliant a victory been achieved by Hollander or Spaniard upon that great battle-ground of Europe—the Netherlands.[24]

Maurice, to whom the chief credit of the victory was unquestionably due, had been firm and impassive during the various aspects of the battle, never losing his self-command when affairs seemed blackest. So soon, however, as the triumph, after wavering so long, was decided in his favour—the veteran legions of Spain and Italy, the picked troops of

[24] "Prometo a V. Sª," wrote the archduke to the Duke of Lorraine, "que no creo me pudiera consolar jamas desta disgracia interesando tanta el servico de su Magistad en ella si no me huviera costado sangre pero asi como ha sido poca la derramara de muy buena gana toda como lo haré y la tengo ofrecido al servicio de su Magestad siempre que sea menester."—Letter to Duke of Lorraine, Bibl. Nat. Madrid, kindly communicated to me by Mons. Gachard.

"L'archiduc a montré ce jour-là une grand valeur, c'est avec beaucoup de peine qu'on l'a determiné à se retirer du champ de bataille."—Letter of Fray Inigo de Brizuelas before cited.

"S. A. en personne combattant comme ung lion."—Extraits des procès-verbaux des Etats-Generaux de 1600. (MS. Archives of Belgium.)

"A quoy respondant, le greffier declaira que les Estats estoyent marriz de ladite disgrace mais tres contens et joyeux de connaitre la vaillandise de leur prince mesmes qu'il n'avoit espargné sa personne propre et de mettre sa vie en hazard pour la deffence de son pays et peuple," &c.—Ibid.

The defeat was mainly attributed in the obedient provinces to the bad conduct of the lately mutinous cavalry. ("Causée principalement par les chevaucheurs amutinez." said Nicolas Dubois, deputy of Tournay, to his constituents in a letter from Brussels of 4th July. MS. Archives of Belgium.) Consolation was also sought in the ridiculous assumption that the loss of the States' army was greater than that of the archduke's forces.

Christendom, all flying at last before his troops—the stadholder was fairly melted. Dismounting from his horse, he threw himself on his knees in the sand, and with streaming eyes and uplifted hands exclaimed, "O God, what are we human creatures to whom Thou hast brought such honour, and to whom Thou hast vouchsafed such a victory!" [25]

The slaughter went on until nightfall, but the wearied conquerors were then obliged to desist from the pursuit. Three thousand Spaniards were slain and about six hundred prisoners were taken.[26] The loss of the States' army, including the affair in the morning at Leffingen, was about two thousand killed. Maurice was censured for not following up his victory more closely, but the criticism seems unjust. The night which followed the warm summer's day was singularly black and cloudy, the army was exhausted, the distance for the enemy to traverse before they found themselves safe within their own territory was not great. In such circumstances the stadholder might well deem himself sufficiently triumphant to have plucked a splendid victory out of the very jaws of death. All the artillery of the archduke—seven pieces besides the two captured from Ernest in the morning—one hundred and twenty standards, and a long list of distinguished prisoners, including the Admiral Zapena and many other officers of note, were the trophies of the conqueror. Maurice passed the night on the battle-field; the admiral supping with him in his tent. Next morning he went to Ostend, where a great thanksgiving was held, Uytenbogart preaching an eloquent sermon on the 116th Psalm. Afterwards there was a dinner at the house of the States-General, in honour of the stadholder, to which the Admiral of Arragon was likewise bidden. That arrogant but discom-

[25] "O Godt, wie zijn wy menschen dien ghy sulcken eere ghedaen ende Over-winninghe ghegheven hebt."—Letter of Uytenbogaert, in P. Fleming, Belegeringe van Oostende. S' Gravenhage, 1621.

[26] Count Ernest puts the loss of the archduke at 4000 killed on the battle-field and 1000 on the retreat. Maurice estimates his enemy's loss at more than 5000. Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives II. s. ii. 15, 18, 19. Duyck says 3000 were killed on the field—as ascertained by counting — besides those who were drowned and slain in the retreat. The archduke's confessor says that 1000 *Spaniards* were killed. (MS. letter before cited.)

fited personage was obliged to listen to many a rough martial joke at his disaster as they sat at table, but he bore the brunt of the encounter with much fortitude.

"Monsieur the Admiral of Arragon," said the stadholder in French, "is more fortunate than many of his army. He has been desiring these four years to see Holland. Now he will make his entrance there without striking a blow."[27] The gibe was perhaps deficient in delicacy towards a fallen foe, but a man who had passed a whole winter in murdering his prisoners in cold blood might be satisfied if he were stung only by a sharp sarcasm or two, when he had himself become a captive.

Others asked him demurely what he thought of these awkward apprentices of Holland and Zeeland, who were good enough at fighting behind dykes and ramparts of cities, but who never ventured to face a Spanish army in the open field. Mendoza sustained himself with equanimity however, and found plenty of answers. He discussed the battle with coolness, blamed the archduke for throwing the whole of his force prematurely into the contest, and applauded the prudence of Maurice in keeping his reserves in hand. He ascribed a great share of the result to the States' artillery, which had been well placed upon wooden platforms and well served, while the archduke's cannon, sinking in the sands, had been of comparatively little use. Especially he expressed a warm admiration for the heroism of Maurice in sending away his ships, and in thus leaving himself and his soldiers no alternative but death or triumph.

While they still sat at table many of the standards taken from the enemy were brought in and exhibited; the stadholder and others amusing themselves with reading the inscriptions and devices emblazoned upon them.

And thus on the 2nd July, 1600, the army of the States-General, led by Maurice of Nassau, had utterly defeated

[27] "Monsieur l'Admirante d'Arragon a este plus heureux que pas un de son armee, car il a fort desiré plus de quatre années continuellement de voir la Hollande, maintenant il y entrera sans coup ferir."—Letter of Uytenbogart, who sat at the table and heard Maurice make the remark.

Albert of Austria.[28] Strange to say—on another 2nd July, three centuries and two years before, a former Albert of Austria had overthrown the emperor Adolphus of Nassau, who had then lost both crown and life in the memorable battle of Worms. The imperial shade of Maurice's ancestor had been signally appeased.

In Ostend, as may well be imagined, ineffable joy had succeeded to the horrible gloom in which the day had been passed, ever since the tidings had been received of Ernest's overthrow.

Those very cavalry men, who had remained all day cowering behind the walls of the city, seeing by the clouds of dust which marked the track of the fugitives that the battle had been won by the comrades whom they had so basely deserted in the morning, had been eager enough to join in the pursuit. It was with difficulty that the States, who had been unable to drive them out of the town while the fight was impending or going on, could keep enough of them within the walls to guard the city against possible accident, now that the work was done. Even had they taken the field a few hours earlier, without participating in the action, or risking their own lives, they might have secured the pass of Leffingen, and made the capture of the archduke or his destruction inevitable.

The city, which had seemed deserted, swarmed with the garrison and with the lately trembling burghers, for it seemed to all as if they had been born again. Even the soldiers on the battle-field had embraced each other like comrades who had met in another world. "Blessed be His holy name," said the stadholder's chaplain, "for His right hand has led us into hell and brought us forth again. I know not," he continued, "if I am awake or if I dream, when I think how God has in one moment raised us from the dead."[29]

[28] "Enfin l'affaire vint aulx mains et fut combattu bien furieusement de deux costés l'espace de deux heures Enfin Dieu par sa grace voulut que la victoire demeura de mon costé." Such were the simple words in which Maurice announced to his cousin Lewis William his victory in the most important battle that had been fought for half a century. Not even General Ulysses Grant could be more modest in the hour of immense triumph.

[29] Letter of Uytenbogart.

Lewis Gunther, whose services had been so conspicuous, was well rewarded. "I hope," said that general, writing to his brother Lewis William, "that this day's work will not have been useless to me, both for what I have learned in it and for another thing. His Excellency has done me the honour to give me the admiral for my prisoner."[30] And equally characteristic was the reply of the religious and thrifty stadholder of Friesland.

"I thank God," he said, "for His singular grace in that He has been pleased to make use of your person as the instrument of so renowned and signal a victory, for which, as you have derived therefrom not mediocre praise, and acquired a great reputation, it should be now your duty to humble yourself before God, and to acknowledge that it is He alone who has thus honoured you . . . . You should reverence Him the more, that while others are admonished of their duty by misfortunes and miseries, the good God invites you to His love by benefits and honours . . . . . I am very glad, too, that his Excellency has given you the admiral for your prisoner, both because of the benefit to you, and because it is a mark of your merit on that day. Knowing the state of our affairs, you will now be able to free your patrimony from encumbrances, when otherwise you would have been in danger of remaining embarrassed and in the power of others. It will therefore be a perpetual honour to you that you, the youngest of us all, have been able by your merits to do more to raise up our house out of its difficulties than your predecessors or myself have been able to do."[31]

The beautiful white horse which the archduke had ridden during the battle fell into the hands of Lewis Gunther, and was presented by him to Prince Maurice, who had expressed great admiration of the charger. It was a Spanish horse, for which the archduke had lately paid eleven hundred crowns.[32]

[30] Lewis Gunther to Lewis William, 20 July, 1600. (Groen v. Prinsterer Archives, II. 23.)
[31] Lewis William to Lewis Gunther, July 1600. Ibid. 42, 43.
[32] Letters last cited.

A white hackney of the Infanta had also been taken, and became the property of Count Ernest.[33]

The news of the great battle spread with unexampled rapidity, not only through the Netherlands but to neighbouring countries. On the night of the 7th July (N.S.) five days after the event, Envoy Caron, in England, received intimations of the favourable news from the French ambassador, who had received a letter from the Governor of Calais. Next morning, very early, he waited on Sir Robert Cecil at Greenwich, and was admitted to his chamber, although the secretary was not yet out of bed. He, too, had heard of the battle, but Richardot had informed the English ambassador in Paris that the victory had been gained, not by the stadholder, but by the archduke. While they were talking, a despatch-bearer arrived with letters from Vere to Cecil, and from the States-General to Caron, dated on the 3rd July. There could no longer be any doubt on the subject, and the envoy of the republic had now full details of the glorious triumph which the Spanish agent in Paris had endeavoured for a time to distort into a defeat.

While the two were conversing, the queen, who had heard of Caron's presence in the palace, sent down for the latest intelligence. Cecil made notes of the most important points in the despatches to be forthwith conveyed to her Majesty. The queen, not satisfied however, sent for Caron himself. That diplomatist, who had just ridden down from London in foul weather, was accordingly obliged to present himself—booted and spurred and splashed with mud from head to foot—before her Majesty.[34] Elizabeth received him with such extraordinary manifestations of delight at the tidings that he was absolutely amazed, and she insisted upon his reading the whole of the letter just received from Olden-Barneveld, her Majesty listening very patiently as he translated it out of Dutch into French. She then expressed unbounded admira-

[33] Letters last cited.

[34] "Hoewel ick daertoe niet gereet was, want ick daer te peerde was gekomen gants vuil en beslyckt door 't quade weder," &c. &c.—Caron to the States-General, in Deventer, ii. 290–293.

tion of the States-General and of Prince Maurice. "The sagacious administration of the States' government is so full of good order and policy," she said, "as to far surpass in its wisdom the intelligence of all kings and potentates." "We kings," she said, "understand nothing of such affairs in comparison, but require, all of us, to go to school to the States-General." She continued to speak in terms of warm approbation of the secrecy and discretion with which the invasion of Flanders had been conducted, and protested that she thanked God on both knees for vouchsafing such a splendid victory to the United Provinces.[35]

Yet after all, her Majesty, as mankind in general, both wise and simple, are apt to do, had judged only according to the result, and the immediate result. No doubt John of Barneveld was second to no living statesman in breadth of view and adroitness of handling, yet the invasion of Flanders, which was purely his work, was unquestionably a grave mistake, and might easily have proved a fatal one. That the deadly peril was escaped was due, not to his prudence, but to the heroism of Maurice, the gallantry of Vere, Count Lewis Gunther, and the forces under them, and the noble self-devotion of Ernest. And even, despite the exertions of these brave men, it seems certain that victory would have been impossible had the archduke possessed that true appreciation of a situation which marks the consummate general.

[35] Caron to States-General, in Deventer, ii. 290–293.

The French king, too, was much pleased with the result of the battle. So soon as he received the news he sent for the States' envoy, and amused himself by reading him only the earlier despatches, which related the success of the archduke at the forts and at Leffingen. Having sufficiently teased him, he then showed him the whole account. The satisfaction manifested by Henry naturally much scandalized the high Catholic party, with whom the king was most desirous of being on good terms.—Aerssens to States-General, 13 July, 1600. (Archives of the Hague MS.)

And in his confidential letters to Valck the envoy expressed himself in similar terms, saying that his own despatches having accidentally been delayed, the king almost gave him a fever by concealing the good news, and telling him of the reverses sustained by the States' troops at the beginning of the day, and adding that his Majesty, although making a great effort, had found it very difficult to dissemble his delight, "car tous ne prennent cette victoire de meme biais, aucuns l'estimant prejudiciable, en tant qu'elle peut ayder a fonder solidement la religion, les autres s'en rejouyssent comme d'un eschecq et affoiblissement a l'Espagne," &c.—MS. before cited, 20 July, 1600.

Surely the Lord seemed to have delivered the enemy into his hands that morning. Maurice was shut in between Nieuport on one side and the archduke's army on the other, planted as it was on the only road of retreat. Had Albert entrenched himself, Maurice must either have attacked at great disadvantage or attempted embarkation in the face of his enemy. To stay indefinitely where he was would have proved an impossibility, and amid the confusion necessary to the shipping of his army, how could he have protected himself by six demi-cannon placed on the sea-beach ?

That Maurice was able to extricate himself from the horrible dilemma in which he had been placed, through no fault of his own, and to convert imminent disaster into magnificent victory, will always redound to his reputation as a great military chief. And this was all the fruit of the expedition, planned, as Elizabeth thought, with so much secrecy and discretion. Three days after the battle the stadholder came again before Nieuport, only to find the garrison strengthened meantime by La Bourlotte to three thousand men. A rainy week succeeded, and Maurice then announced to the States-General the necessity of abandoning an enterprise, a successful issue to which was in his opinion impossible. The States-General, grown more modest in military matters, testified their willingness to be governed by his better judgment, and left Ostend for the Hague on the 18th July. Maurice, after a little skirmishing with some of the forts around that city, in one of which the archduke's general La Bourlotte was killed, decided to close the campaign, and he returned with his whole army on the last day of July into Holland.[36]

[36] The chief authorities used by me for the campaign of Nieuport are the following:—Bentivoglio, P. III. lib. vi. pp. 496–504; Carnero, lib. xiv. cap. vii. 472–481; Meteren, 437–442; Reyd, B. xvii. 427–433; Bor, IV. 603–700; De la Pise, 681–687; Sir Francis Vere, La Bataille de Nieupoort apud Bor, Byvoegsels van Authent. Stukken, iv.; Wagenaar, ix. 76–88; Van Wyn op Wagen, ix. 37–47; Grotius, Histor. ix. 552–573; Van der Kemp, ii. 62–82 and 251–286; Philippe Fleming; Belegeringe van Oostende ('s Gravenhage, 1621), pp. 27–52; Henry Haestens, La Nouvelle Troie, ou Memorable Histoire du Siege d'Ostende. Leyden, Elzevir, 1615, pp. 1–69; Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, &c. II. 14–43 (2nd series); MS. Letters of States-General, of Queen Elizabeth, and of Envoy Noel de Caron, in the Royal Archives of the Hague; De Thou, t. xiii. lib. 124, pp. 467–481; Le Petit,

The expedition was an absolute failure, but the stadholder had gained a great victory. The effect produced at home and abroad by this triumphant measuring of the republican forces, horse, foot, and artillery, in a pitched battle and on so conspicuous an arena, with the picked veterans of Spain and Italy, was perhaps worth the cost, but no other benefit was derived from the invasion of Flanders.

The most healthy moral to be drawn from this brief but memorable campaign is that the wisest statesmen are prone to blunder in affairs of war, success in which seems to require a special education and a distinct genius. Alternation between hope and despair, between culpable audacity and exaggerated prudence, are but too apt to mark the warlike counsels of politicians who have not been bred soldiers. This, at least, had been eminently the case with Barneveld and his colleagues of the States-General.

'Grande Chronique,' vol. ii. pp. 762–766; Camden's 'Elizabeth,' 590–593; MS. Letters of Buzanval to Villeroy in the Royal Library of the Hague, especially 4 July, 20 July, 5 August, 17 August, 1600; Antony Duyck, Journaal, ii. 661–681.

No one censured more sharply the policy of the expedition, nor reduced its results more pitilessly, than did the French envoy: "Croyez que ces Messrs.," said he, "avoient bien joué leur etat a un coup de dé et que le P. Maurice avoit fait paroistre sa prudence avant de partir de ce lieu en remonstrant aux Etats les accidents de cette entreprise et sa suite infaillible et forcée d'une bataille. Il a bien montré sa resolution quand il a fallu boire la lie de ces indigestes conseils." And again: — "La suite de cette bataille a été plus desavantageuse aux victorieux qu'aux vaincus qui se sont relevez avec plus de vigueur que les autres n'ont poursuivi leur pointe." And once more:—"C'est un eclair qui a passé qui a plus donné de lustre aux vainqueurs que fait du mal aux vaincus. On diroit qu'elle auroit tout epuisé la vertu et vigueur de l'un et fait surgir la force de l'autre. Mais à la verité les fondemens de cette entreprise de Flandres etoient si mal jettés comme vous avez peu voir par celles que je vous ai escrits lorsqu'elle fait resolue qu'il se faut peu estonner si ils ont eu si peu d'issue et de suite. . . . . car on fait ici beaucoup plus de plaintes du peu de suite de cette victoire qu'il ne m'en escrit de Bruxelles," &c. &c. As to the numbers engaged in the battle, Duyck puts the archduke's force at 10,000 foot and 1600 horse, including the detachment of 2000 or 3000 under Velasco, which was not in the action. More than a third of those engaged were killed. Maurice had at first 198 companies of foot and 25 companies of horse, but, with deduction of the detachments to strengthen the forts, his force was not more than 10,000 foot and 1200 horse (including the troops of Ernest destroyed before nine o'clock).

NOTE ON VERE.

I HAVE endeavoured in the account of this campaign to reconcile discrepancies where it was possible to reconcile them. I have studied carefully the narratives given by the most prominent actors in the battle; but, in regard to Sir Francis Vere, I am bound to say that, after much consideration, I have rejected his statements wherever they conflict with those of Maurice, Lewis Gunther, and Ernest of Nassau.

The mutual contradictions are often so direct as to make it impossible for both parties to be partly right and partly incorrect, and, as all were prominently engaged in the transactions, and all men of courage and distinction, it is absolutely necessary at times to decide between them.

The narrative of Vere was a publication; a party pamphlet in an age of pamphleteering. It is marked throughout by spleen, inordinate personal and national self-esteem, undisguised hostility to the Nassaus and the Hollanders, and wounded pride of opinion. It shows occasional looseness or recklessness of assertion which would have been almost impossible, had Maurice or his cousins been likely to engage in a controversy concerning the Nieuport expedition.

It is not agreeable to come to this conclusion in regard to a man of unquestionable talent, high character, and experience, who fought on that memorable day with splendid valour. I shall therefore give a few extracts from his narrative, and place them here and there in juxtaposition with passages from the correspondence of the Nassaus, in order to justify my opinion.

It must be borne in mind that these latter documents have remained in the family archives of Orange-Nassau for two centuries and a half, never having seen the light till they were edited by the learned and accomplished Groen van Prinsterer. The controversy with Vere is therefore an all unconscious one on the part of those buried warriors, but the examination of such samples of conflicting testimony may give the general reader a conception of the difficulty besetting the path of modern historians wishing to be conscientious and disinterested.

Sir Francis says, *without giving any dates*, that the army reached and crossed the haven of Nieuport on a certain morning, that they encamped and occupied *two or three days* in arranging their quarters, and in entrenching themselves in the most advantageous places for their own safety, and for the siege of the city; *making a bridge of stone* at the narrowest part of the harbour, to enable their troops and trains to cross and recross whenever necessary.

Now if there be two dates perfectly established in history by the concurrent testimony of despatches, resolutions of Assembly, contemporary chronicles,—Dutch, Spanish, Italian, or French,—and private letters of the chief personages engaged in the transactions, it is that Maurice's army came before Nieuport on the morning of the 1st July, crossing the harbour in the course of the same day, and that the battle was fought on the 2nd July.[1]

[1] "Je partoy droit devers Nieuport et m'y campoys le *premier de ce mois de juillet* et devant bien estre encores campé je fus adverti la même nuit que l'ennemi s'estoit anproché d'Ostende," &c.&c., says Maurice of Nassau. Letter to Count Lewis William, written 2nd July, evening after the battle. Groen van Prinsterer. Archives, II. 16, 17. Compare Bor, Meteren, Fleming,

What could Vere mean then by talking of two or three days in the trenches and of a stone bridge? Yet these are his words:—"Le matin de bonne heure nous marchames vers Nieuport et a la basse marée traversames la riviere du coste ou elle faist le Havre de la ville, et ainsy nous campasmes mettans deux ou trois jours à faire les quartiers, et à nous retrancher ès lieux les plus advantageux pour notre seureté, et le siege de ville, *faisans un pont de pierre* au plus estroict du Havre pour y faire passer et repasser en tout temps nostre chariage et nos troupes, quand besoin en seroit."

On the intelligence received in the night of the arrival of the enemy at Oudenburg, Vere advised instantly crossing the harbour and marching against him with the whole army. Maurice decided, however, to send the detachment under Ernest, to the great dissatisfaction of Sir Francis.

Vere then states that the army was ordered to *cross the haven at dawn of day, at the first low tide.*

"Le reste de l'armee fut commandé de marcher vers la riviere afin de la passer à l'aube du jour à la premiere basse marée."

Now it is certain that on the 2nd of July it was exactly *high tide* at 3 A.M., or *about dawn of day.*

Count Lewis Gunther states expressly in his letter, often cited, that he was first to cross with the cavalry, when the tide was out, at about 8 A.M. It is also manifest by every account given of the battle, that it was high tide again at or after 3 P.M., which compelled the transferring of the fight from the submerged beach to the downs and to the pastures beyond.

In these statements Vere is so manifestly contradicted, not only by the accounts given by all contemporaries and eye-witnesses, but by other passages in his own narrative, that one has in general a right to prefer the assertions of other actors in the battle to his, if there is no other way of arriving at a clear understanding of the affair.

Thus he says that at the beginning of the action he wished the advanced cavalry under Lewis Gunther to approach the enemy, and that "the young lord" refused. The account of the young lord is the exact reverse of these assertions. I shall here give in juxtaposition the text of Vere and of the private letter of Lewis, observing that this letter—not written for publication, and never published, so far as I know, till two hundred and fifty years after it was written for the private information of the writer's brother—gives by far the most intelligible and succinct account of the battle to be met with anywhere.

LEWIS GUNTHER.	VERE.
"J'en avoy envoié advertir son Exce que je m'estoy mis là en ordre et que je n'en bouger oy sans son expres commandement, le supliant de haster le passage de l'infanterie . . . . Monsieur Veer vint aussitot me trouver et jugeoit que je m'estois trop avancé, trouvant necessaire qu'on se resteroit	"Le ennemy approchant de plus en plus, et la cavaillerie sortant a la teste de leurs troupes en une distance competente pour pouvoir estre attiree au combat, j'avoy grand envie de voir la cavaillerie de l'avantguarde approcher d'elle et avec quelques gens d'eslite et bien montes battre leurs carbins et

Haestens, De Thou, Bentivoglio, original documents in Van der Kemp, vol. ii. Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau, *passim, et mult. al.*

"Et le tems ne voulant permettre que le pont qui estoit commencé à faire outre le dit havre s'ascheva," &c. Letter of Lewis Gunther to Lewis William.

LEWIS GUNTHER.

plus pres de l'infanterie dont l'avantgarde estoit presques passee. Je craignois fort que ceste retraicte ne nous eust causé de confusion, l'ennemy nous estant si proche, et qu'elle eut refroidi le courage de nos soldats. Ce que me fit le prier qu'il avançast plustot l'infanterie jusques derriere ma troupe: ce que pourroit apporter de confort aux nostres et de l'etonnement a l'ennemy duquel l'infanterie n'estoit encor arrivé ny mise en ordre. Je demeuray encor a la mesme place une heure, y aiant esté desja bien davantage jusques á ce que son Exce. y vint en personne. Il fut conclu que je me retirerois et me planterois à l'aisle gauche des Anglois . . . . Il fust résolu alors que j'envoieroy deux companies seulement bien pres d'eux pour leur faire prendre l'envie de se resoudre a les venir charger et que les notres s'enfuians derriere ma troupe donnassent occasion aux ennemis de les poursuivre la furie desquels nostre cannon appaisant un peu et nos musquetiers qui estoient bien avancés dans les dunes, à demy en embuscade, les frottant de coste, et aprés nostre cavallerie les chargeant en face, indubitablement nous eut des alors este ouvert le chemin de la victoire, car on les eut facilement renversez dans leur infanterie, la confusion de laquelle n'eut sçeu estre que bien grande: mais la haste de nos canoniers nous fit perdre les effects de cette belle resolution, a cause que la voiant si belle donnerent feu devant qu'on y eut envoié ces compagnise et avec la premiere volée les mit-on en desordre qu'ls quittarent le strang et se cacharent aux dunes pour n'estre offensez du canon."

Thus Lewis says most distinctly that he approved of the "beautiful resolution" as he calls it, which he rejected, according to Vere, from jealousy, and that the cause why it was not carried out was the premature cannonade, which Vere says that he himself ordered!

VERE.

escarmoucheurs jusques à dessus leur gros, en intention que s'ils eussent este recharges de retirer en haste avec la dite avantguarde de chevaulx entre la mer et l'avantgarde d'infanterie, et apres les avoir tirez arriere de leur infanterie soubs la mercy de nostre canon, avoir engagé le reste de nos chevaux a charger et suivre resolument. *Mais le jeusne seigneur ne peut trouver bon cest advis n'ayant pas eu agreable le pouvoir que le comte Maurice m'avoit donné par dessus sa charge et partant ne l'executa pas choississant plustot comme l'ennemy advancoit tout bellement reculer de mesme vers l'infanterie.* Ce mien conseil neparvenant a autre meilleur effect et desja la cavaillerie estant venue soubs la portee de nostre canon, *je proposai qu'il le falloit descharger*, qui fut trouvé bon et si bien effectué qu'il faisoit escarter leurs troupes et fuir en desordre pour se sauver dedans les dunes, chose qui sans doute, nous eust donné la victoire si notre cavaillerie eust ete preste et volontaire a se prevaloir de l'occasion offerte."

These extracts will be sufficient to show the impossibility of making both accounts agree in regard to many momentous points.

When did two accounts of the same battle ever resemble each other? It must be confessed that modesty was not a leading characteristic of Sir Francis Vere. According to the whole tenor of his narrative he was

himself not only a great part, but the whole of the events he describes; the victory of Nieuport was entirely due to his arrangements, and to the personal valour of himself and of the 1600 English soldiers; Prince Maurice filling hardly a subordinate part in superintendence of the battle, Count Lewis Gunther being dismissed with a single sneer, and no other name but Vere's own and that of his brother Horace being even mentioned. He admits that he did not participate in the final and conclusive charge, being then disabled, but observes that having satisfied himself that his directions would be carried out, and that nothing else was left but to pursue the enemy, he thought it time to have his wounds dressed.

"There was no loss worth speaking of," he says, "except that of the English, 600 of whom were killed. I should not venture to attribute," he observes, "the whole honour of the victory to the poor English troop of 1600 men, but I leave the judgment thereof to those who can decide with less suspicion of partiality. I will merely affirm that the English left nothing to do for the rest of the army but to follow the chase, and that one has never before heard that with so small a number in an indifferent position, where the only advantage was the choice and the good use which could be made of it, without the use of spade or other instrument of fortification, an army so large and so victorious as that of the archduke could have been resisted in such a continued struggle and so thoroughly defeated."

Certainly the defeat of an army of 10,000 veterans in the open field by 1600 men is a phenomenon rarely witnessed, and one must be forgiven for not accepting as gospel truth the account of the leader of the 1600, when it is directly contradicted by every other statement on record.

In Vere's advanced guard—nearly half the whole army—there were 2600 Englishmen and 2800 Frisians, besides several squadrons of cavalry, according to his own statement in another part of his narrative.

How, therefore, the whole battle should have been fought by a mere portion of the English contingent it is difficult to comprehend.

Vere makes no allusion to the combat of Leffingen, which was an essential part of the battle; to the heroic self-sacrifice of Ernest and his division, by which alone the rest of the army were enabled to gain the victory; nor has he a word for the repeated charges of cavalry by which the infantry fight was protected.

Lewis Gunther on the contrary, whose account is as modest as it is clear, gives full credit to the splendid achievements of the infantry under Vere, but in describing the cavalry combats, he mentions the loss in the six cavalry companies under his immediate command as 171 killed and wounded, while Ernest's loss has never been placed at less than 1000.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Effects of the Nieuport campaign — The general and the statesman — The Roman empire and the Turk — Disgraceful proceedings of the mutinous soldiers in Hungary — The Dunkirk pirates — Siege of Ostend by the Archduke — Attack on Rheinberg by Prince Maurice — Siege and capitulation of Meurs — Attempt on Bois-le-Duc — Concentration of the war at Ostend — Account of the belligerents — Details of the siege — Feigned offer of Sir Francis Vere to capitulate — Arrival of reinforcements from the States — Attack and overthrow of the besiegers.

THE Nieuport campaign had exhausted for the time both belligerents. The victor had saved the republic from impending annihilation, but was incapable of further efforts during the summer. The conquered cardinal-archduke, remaining essentially in the same position as before, consoled himself with the agreeable fiction that the States, notwithstanding their triumph, had in reality suffered the most in the great battle. Meantime both parties did their best to repair damages and to recruit their armies.

The States—or in other words Barneveld, who was the States—had learned a lesson. Time was to show whether it would be a profitable one, or whether Maurice, who was the preceptor of Europe in the art of war, would continue to be a docile pupil of the great Advocate even in military affairs. It is probable that the alienation between the statesman and the general, which was to widen as time advanced, may be dated from the day of Nieuport.

Fables have even been told which indicated the popular belief in an intensity of resentment on the part of the prince, which certainly did not exist till long afterwards.

"Ah, scoundrel!" the stadholder was said to have exclaimed, giving the Advocate a box on the ear as he came to

wish him joy of his great victory, "you sold us, but God prevented your making the transfer."[1]

History would disdain even an allusion to such figments—quite as disgraceful, certainly to Maurice as to Barneveld—did they not point the moral and foreshadow some of the vast but distant results of events which had already taken place, and had they not been so generally repeated that it is a duty for the lover of truth to put his foot upon the calumny, even at the risk for a passing moment of reviving it.

The condition of the war in Flanders had established a temporary equilibrium among the western powers—France and England discussing, intriguing, and combining in secret with each other, against each other, and in spite of each other, in regard to the great conflict—while Spain and the cardinal-archduke on the one side, and the republic on the other, prepared themselves for another encounter in the blood-stained arena.

Meantime, on the opposite verge of what was called European civilization, the perpetual war between the Roman Empire and the Grand Turk had for the moment been brought into a nearly similar equation. Notwithstanding the vast amount of gunpowder exploded during so many wearisome years, the problem of the Crescent and the Cross was not much nearer a solution in the East than was that of mass and conventicle in the West. War was the normal and natural condition of mankind. This fact, at least, seemed to have been acquired and added to the mass of human knowledge.

From the prolific womb of Germany came forth, to swell impartially the Protestant and Catholic hosts, vast swarms of human creatures. Sold by their masters at as high prices as could be agreed upon beforehand, and receiving for themselves five stivers a day, irregularly paid, until the carrion-crow rendered them the last service, they found at times more demand for their labor in the great European market

[1] See Van der Kemp, ii. 88 and 298, 299. The learned historian of course denounces the tale as a falsehood.

than they could fully supply. There were not Germans enough every year for the consumption of the Turk, and the pope, and the emperor, and the republic, and the Catholic king, and the Christian king, with both ends of Europe ablaze at once. So it happened that the Duke of Mercœur and other heroes of the League, having effected their reconciliation with the Béarnese, and for a handsome price paid down on the nail having acknowledged him to be their legitimate and Catholic sovereign, now turned their temporary attention to the Turk. The sweepings of the League—Frenchmen, Walloons, Germans, Italians, Spaniards—were tossed into Hungary, because for a season the war had become languid in Flanders. And the warriors grown grey in the religious wars of France astonished the pagans on the Danube by a variety of crimes and cruelties such as Christians only could imagine. Thus, while the forces of the Sultan were besieging Buda, a detachment of these ancient Leaguers lay in Pappa, a fortified town not far from Raab, which Archduke Maximilian had taken by storm two years before. Finding their existence monotonous and payments unpunctual, they rose upon the governor, Michael Maroti, and then entered into a treaty with the Turkish commander outside the walls. Bringing all the principal citizens of the town, their wives and children, and all their moveable property into the market-place, they offered to sell the lot, including the governor, for a hundred thousand rix dollars. The bargain was struck, and the Turk, paying him all his cash on hand and giving hostages for the remainder, carried off six hundred of the men and women, promising soon to return and complete the transaction.[2] Meantime the imperial general, Schwartzenberg, came before the place, urging the mutineers with promises of speedy payment, and with appeals to their sense of shame, to abstain from the disgraceful work. He might as well have preached to the wild swine swarming in the adjacent forests. Siege thereupon was laid to the place. In a sortie the brave Schwartzenberg was killed, but Colonitz coming up in force

[2] Meteren, fol. 447.

the mutineers were locked up in the town which they had seized, and the Turk never came to their relief. Famine drove them at last to choose between surrender and a desperate attempt to cut their way out. They took the bolder course, and were all either killed or captured. And now—the mutineers having given the Turk this lesson in Christian honour towards captives—their comrades and the rest of the imperial forces showed them the latest and most approved Christian method of treating mutineers. Several hundred of the prisoners were distributed among the different nationalities composing the army to be dealt with at pleasure. The honest Germans were the most straightforward of all towards their portion of the prisoners, for they shot them down at once, without an instant's hesitation. But the Lorrainers, the remainder of the French troops, the Walloons, and especially the Hungarians—whose countrymen and women had been sold into captivity—all vied with each other in the invention of cruelties at which the soul sickens, and which the pen almost refuses to depict.[2]

These operations and diversions had no sensible effect upon the progress of the war, which crept on with the same monotonous and sluggish cruelty as ever; but the incidents narrated paint the course of civilization more vividly than the detailed accounts of siege and battle, mining and countermining, assaults and ambuscades can do, of which the history books are full. The leaguers of Buda and of other cities and fortresses in Hungary went their course, and it was destined to remain for a still longer season doubtful whether Cross or Crescent should ultimately wave over the whole territory of Eastern Europe, and whether the vigorous Moslem, believing in himself, his mission, his discipline, and his resources, should ultimately absorb what was left of the ancient Roman Empire.

Meantime, such of the Walloons, Lorrainers, Germans, and Frenchmen as had grown wearied of the fighting on the Danube and the Theiss might have recourse for variety to

[3] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

the perpetual carnage on the Meuse, the Rhine, and the Scheld. If there was not bloodshed enough for all, it was surely not the fault of Mahomet, nor Clement, nor Philip.

During the remainder of the year not much was done in the field by the forces of the stadholder or the cardinal, but there was immense damage done to the Dutch shipping by the famous privateersman, Van der Waecken, with his squadron of twelve or fourteen armed cruisers. In vain had the States exerted themselves to destroy that robber's cave, Dunkirk. Shiploads of granite had been brought from Norway, and stone fleets had been sunk in the channel, but the insatiable quicksands had swallowed them as fast as they could be deposited, the tide rolled as freely as before, and the bold pirates sailed forth as gaily as ever to prey upon the defenceless trading vessels and herring-smacks of the States. For it was only upon non-combatants that Admiral Van der Waecken made war, and the fishermen especially, who mainly belonged to the Memnonite religion, with its doctrines of non-resistance[4]—not a very comfortable practice in that sanguinary age—were his constant victims. And his cruelties might have almost served as a model to the Christian warriors on the Turkish frontier. After each vessel had been rifled of everything worth possessing, and then scuttled, the admiral would order the crews to be thrown overboard at once, or, if he chanced to be in a merry mood, would cause them to be fastened to the cabin floor, or nailed crosswise to the deck, and would then sail away, leaving ship and sailors to sink at leisure.[5] The States gave chase as well as they could to the miscreant—a Dutchman born, and with a crew mainly composed of renegade Netherlanders and other outcasts, preying for base lucre on their defenceless countrymen—and their cruisers were occasionally fortunate enough to capture and bring in one of the pirate ships. In such cases, short shrift was granted, and the buccaneers were

[4] "Ergo imbelle hominum genus et est plerisque piscatorum ea religio quae nefas ducit vim armis propellere," &c. &c.—Grotii Hist. ix. 575. Compare Meteren, fol. 445.

[5] Meteren, Grotius, *ubi sup.*

hanged without mercy, thirty-eight having been executed in one morning at Rotterdam. The admiral with most of his vessels escaped, however, to the coast of Spain, where his crews during the autumn mainly contrived to desert, and where he himself died in the winter, whether from malady, remorse, or disappointment at not being rewarded by a high position in the Spanish navy, has not been satisfactorily decided.[6]

The war was in its old age. The leaf of a new century had been turned, and men in middle life had never known what the word Peace meant. Perhaps they could hardly imagine such a condition. This is easily said, but it is difficult really to picture to ourselves the moral constitution of a race of mankind which had been born and had grown up, marrying and giving in marriage, dying and burying their dead, and so passing on from the cradle towards the grave, accepting the eternal clang of arms, and the constant participation by themselves and those nearest to them in the dangers, privations, and horrors of siege and battle-field as the commonplaces of life. At least, those Netherlanders knew what fighting for independence of a foreign tyrant meant. They must have hated Spain very thoroughly, and believed in the right of man to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, and to govern himself upon his own soil, however meagre, very earnestly, or they would hardly have spent their blood and treasure, year after year, with such mercantile regularity when it was always in their power to make peace by giving up the object for which they had been fighting.

Yet the war, although in its old age, was not fallen into decrepitude. The most considerable and most sanguinary pitched battle of what then were modern times had just been fought, and the combatants were preparing themselves for a fresh wrestle, as if the conflict had only begun. And now—although the great leaguers of Harlem, Leyden, and Antwerp, as well as the more recent masterpieces of Prince Maurice in Gelderland and Friesland were still fresh in men's memory—there was to be a siege, which for endurance, pertinacity,

[6] "Interiit morbo an quia Hispanis fastiditus," says Grotius, *ubi sup.*

valour, and bloodshed on both sides, had not yet been foreshadowed, far less equalled, upon the fatal Netherland soil.

That place of fashionable resort, where the fine folk of Europe now bathe, and flirt, and prattle politics or scandal so cheerfully during the summer solstice—cool and comfortable Ostend—was throughout the sixteenth century as obscure a fishing village as could be found in Christendom. Nothing had ever happened there, nobody had ever lived there, and it was not until a much later period that the famous oyster, now identified with its name, had been brought to its bay to be educated. It was known for nothing except for claiming to have invented the pickling of herrings, which was not at all the fact.[7] Towards the latter part of the century, however, the poor little open village had been fortified to such purpose as to enable it to beat off the great Alexander Farnese, when he had made an impromptu effort to seize it in the year 1583, after his successful enterprise against Dunkirk and Nieuport, and subsequent preparation had fortunately been made against any further attempt. For in the opening period of the new century thousands and tens of thousands were to come to those yellow sands, not for a midsummer holiday, but to join hands in one of the most enduring struggles that history had yet recorded, and on which the attention of Europe was for a long time to be steadily fixed.

Ostend—East-end—was the only possession of the republic in Flanders. Having been at last thoroughly fortified according to the principles of the age, it was a place whence much damage was inflicted upon the enemy, and whence forays upon the obedient Flemings could very successfully be conducted. Being in the hands of so enterprising a naval power, it controlled the coast, while the cardinal-archduke on the other side fondly hoped that its possession would give him supremacy on the sea. The States of Flanders declared it to be a thorn in the Belgic lion's foot, and called urgently upon their soveregn to remove the annoyance.

[7] La Nouvelle Troie, ou Memorable Histoire du Siege d'Ostende, par Henry Haestens. Leyde, 1615, pp. 79, 80.

They offered Albert 300,000 florins a month so long as the siege should last, besides an extraordinary sum of 300,000, of which one third was to be paid when the place should be invested, one-third when the breach had been made, and one-third after the town had been taken.[8] It was obvious that, although they thought the extraction of the thorn might prove troublesome, the process would be accomplished within a reasonable time. The cardinal-archduke, on his part, was as anxious as the "members" of Flanders. Asking how long the Duke of Parma had been in taking Antwerp, and being told "eighteen months," he replied that, if necessary, he was willing to employ eighteen years in reducing Ostend.[9]

The town thus about to assume so much importance in the world's eye had about three thousand inhabitants within its lowly, thatch-roofed houses. It fronted directly upon the sea-coast and stretched backward in a southerly direction, having the sandy downs on the right and left, and a swampy, spongy soil on the inner verge, where it communicated with the land. Its northern part, small and scarcely inhabited, was lashed by the ocean, and exposed to perpetual danger from its storms and flood-tides, but was partially protected from these encroachments by a dyke stretching along the coast on the west. Here had hitherto been the harbour formed by the mouth of the river Iperleda as it mingled with the sea, but this entrance had become so choked with sand as to be almost useless at low water. This circumstance would have rendered the labours of the archduke comparatively easy, and much discouraged the States, had there not fortunately been a new harbour which had formed itself on the eastern side exactly at the period of threatened danger. The dwarf mountain range of dunes which encircled the town on the eastern side had been purposely levelled, lest the higher summits should offer positions of vantage to a besieging foe. In consequence of this operation, the sea had burst over the land and swept

[8] Haestens, 99. Philip Fleming. Oostende. Vermaerde gheweldige, lanckduyrighe ende Bloedighe Belegeringhe, etc. beschreven door Philippe Fleming. 's Gravenhage, 1621, p. 62.

[9] Angeli Galluccii de Bello Belgico, Romæ, 1671. Pars Altera, p. 184.

completely around the place, almost converting it into an island, while at high water there opened a wide and profound gulf which with the ebb left an excellent channel quite deep enough for even the ships of war of those days. The next care of the States authorities was to pierce their fortifications on this side at a convenient point, thus creating a safe and snug haven within the walls for the fleets of transports which were soon to arrive by open sea, laden with soldiers and munitions.

The whole place was about half an hour's walk in circumference. It was surrounded with a regular counterscarp, bastions, and casemates, while the proximity of the ocean and the humid nature of the soil ensured it a network of foss and canal on every side. On the left or western side, where the old harbour had once been, and which was the most vulnerable by nature, was a series of strong ravelins, the most conspicuous of which were called the Sand Hill, the Porcupine, and Hell's Mouth. Beyond these, towards the southwest, were some detached fortifications, resting for support, however, upon the place itself, called the Polder, the Square, and the South Square. On the east side, which was almost inaccessible, as it would seem, by such siege machinery as then existed, was a work called the Spanish half-moon, situate on the new harbour called the Guele or Gullet.

Towards the west and southwest, externally, upon the territory of Flanders—not an inch of which belonged to the republic, save the sea-beaten corner in which nestled the little town — eighteen fortresses had been constructed by the archduke as a protection against hostile incursions from the place. Of these, the most considerable were St. Albert, often mentioned during the Nieuport campaign, St. Isabella-St. Clara, and Great-Thirst.[10]

On the 5th July, 1601, the archduke came before the town, and formally began the siege. He established his headquarters in the fort which bore the name of 5 July, 1601.

[10] Fleming, Haestens, Guicciardini *in voce*. Bentivoglio, P. III. lib. vi. 505, 506. Meteren, 454, 455.

his patron saint. Frederic van den Berg meanwhile occupied fort Bredené on the eastern side, with the intention, if possible, of getting possession of the Gullet, or at least of rendering the entrance to that harbour impossible by means of his hostile demonstrations. Uuder Van den Berg was Count Bucquoy-Longueval, a Walloon officer of much energy and experience, now general-in-chief of artillery in the archduke's army.

The numbers with which Albert took the field at first have not been accurately stated, but it is probable that his object was to keep as many as twenty thousand constantly engaged in the siege, and that in this regard he was generally successful.

Within the town were fifty-nine companies of infantry, to which were soon added twenty-three more under command of young Chatillon, grandson of the great Coligny. It was "an *olla podrida* of nationalities," according to the diarist of the siege. English, Scotch, Dutch, Flemings, Frenchmen, Germans, mixed in about equal proportions.[11] . Commander-in-chief at the outset was Sir Francis Vere, who established himself by the middle of July in the place, sent thither by order of the States-General. It had been the desire of that assembly that the stadholder should make another foray in Flanders for the purpose of driving off the archduke before he should have time to complete his preliminary operations. But for that year at least Maurice was resolved not to renounce his own schemes in deference to those so much more ignorant than himself of the art of war, even if Barneveld and his subordinates on their part had not learned a requisite lesson of modesty.

So the prince, instead of risking another Nieuport campaign, took the field with a small but well-appointed force, about ten thousand men in all, marched to the Rhine, and early in June, laid siege to Rheinberg.[12] It was his purpose to leave the archduke for the time to break his

10 June, 1601.

[11] Meteren, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* Fleming, 74, *seqq.*
[12] Meteren, 454. Grotius, x, 580–582. Van der Kemp, ii. 94, 95, and notes.

teeth against the walls of Ostend, while he would himself protect the eastern frontier, over which came regular reinforcements and supplies for the Catholic armies. His works were laid out with his customary precision and neatness. But, standing as usual, like a professor at his blackboard, demonstrating his proposition to the town, he was disturbed in his calculations by the abstraction from his little army of two thousand English troops ordered by the States-General to march to the defence of Ostend. The most mathematical but most obedient of princes, annoyed but not disconcerted, sent off the troops but continued his demonstration.

"By this specimen," cried the French envoy, with enthusiasm, "judge of the energy of this little commonwealth. They are besieging Berg with an army of twelve thousand men, a place beyond the frontier, and five days' march from the Hague. They are defending another important place, besieged by the principal forces of the archdukes, and there is good chance of success at both points. They are doing all this too with such a train of equipages of artillery, of munitions, of barks, of ships of war, that I hardly know of a monarch in the world who would not be troubled to furnish such a force of warlike machinery." [13]

By the middle of July he sprang a mine under the fortifications, doing much damage and sending into the air a considerable portion of the garrison. Two of the soldiers were blown into his own camp, and one of them, strangely enough, was but slightly injured. Coming as he did through the air at cannon-ball speed, he was of course able to bring the freshest intelligence from the interior of the town His news as to the condition of the siege confirmed the theory of the stadholder. He persisted in his operations for three weeks longer, and the place was then surrendered.[14] The same terms—moderate and honourable—were given to the garrison and the burghers as in all Maurice's victories. Those who liked to stay were at liberty to do so,

11 July.

30 July, 1601.

[13] Buzanval to Villeroy, 24 July, 1601, cited by Van Deventer, ii. 294.
[14] Meteren, Grotius, Van der Kemp, *ubi sup.*

accepting the prohibition of public worship according to the Roman ritual, but guaranteed against inquisition into household or conscience. The garrison went out with the honours of war, and thus the place, whose military value caused it to change hands almost as frequently as a counter in a game, was once more in possession of the republic. In the course of the following week Maurice laid siege to the city of Meurs, a little farther up the Rhine, which immediately capitulated.[15] Thus the keys to the debatable land of Cleves and Juliers, the scene of the Admiral of Arragon's recent barbarities, were now held by the stadholder.

6 August, 1601.

These achievements were followed by an unsuccessful attempt upon Bois-le-Duc in the course of November. The place would have fallen notwithstanding the slenderness of the besieging army had not a sudden and severe frost caused the prudent prince to raise the siege. Feeling that his cousin Frederic van den Berg, who had been despatched from before Ostend to command the relieving force near Bois-le-Duc, might take advantage of the prematurely frozen canals and rivers to make an incursion into Holland, he left his city just as his works had been sufficiently advanced to ensure possession of the prize, and hastened to protect the heart of the republic from possible danger.[16]

November, 1601.

Nothing further was accomplished by Maurice that year, but meantime something had been doing within and around Ostend.

For now the siege of Ostend became the war, and was likely to continue to be the war for a long time to come; all other military operations being to a certain degree suspended, as if by general consent of both belligerants, or rendered subsidiary to the main design. So long as this little place should be beleaguered it was the purpose of the States, and of Maurice, acting in harmony with those authorities, to concentrate their resources so as to strengthen the grip with which the only scrap of Flanders was held by the republic.

[15] Meteren, Grotius, Van der Kemp, *ubi sup.*
[16] Meteren, 457; Van der Kemp, 96, 97, and notes.

And as time wore on, the supposed necessities of the wealthy province, which, in political importance, made up a full half of the archduke's dominions, together with self-esteem and an exaggerated idea of military honour, made that prelate more and more determined to effect his purpose.

So upon those barren sands was opened a great academy in which the science and the art of war were to be taught by the most skilful practitioners to all Europe ; for no general, corporal, artillerist, barber-surgeon, or engineer, would be deemed to know his trade if he had not fought at Ostend ; and thither resorted month after month warriors of every rank, from men of royal or of noblest blood to adventurers of lowlier degree, whose only fortune was buckled at their sides. From every land, of every religion, of every race, they poured into the town or into the besiegers' trenches. Habsburg and Holstein ; Northumberland, Vere, and Westmoreland ; Fairfax and Stuart ; Bourbon, Chatillon, and Lorraine ; Bentivoglio, Farnese, Spinola, Grimaldi, Arragon, Toledo, Avila, Berlaymont, Bucquoy, Nassau, Orange, Solms — such were the historic names of a few only of the pupils or professors in that sanguinary high school, mingled with the plainer but well-known patronymics of the Baxes, Meetkerkes, Van Loons, Marquettes, Van der Meers, and Barendrechts, whose bearers were fighting, as they long had fought, for all that men most dearly prize on earth, and not to win honour or to take doctors' degrees in blood. Papist, Calvinist, Lutheran, Turk, Jew and Moor, European, Asiatic, African, all came to dance in that long carnival of death ; and every incident, every detail throughout the weary siege could if necessary be reproduced ; for so profound and general was the attention excited throughout Christendom by these extensive operations, and so new and astonishing were many of the inventions and machines employed—most of them now as familiar as gunpowder or as antiquated as a catapult—that contemporaries have been most bountiful in their records for the benefit of posterity, feeling sure of a gratitude which perhaps has not been rendered to their shades.

Especially the indefatigable Philip Fleming—auditor and secretary of Ostend before and during the siege, bravest, most conscientious, and most ingenious of clerks — has chronicled faithfully in his diary almost every cannon-shot that was fired, house that was set on fire, officer that was killed, and has pourtrayed each new machine that was invented or imagined by native or foreign genius. For the adepts or pretenders who swarmed to town or camp from every corner of the earth, bringing in their hands or brains to be disposed of by either belligerents infallible recipes for terminating the siege at a single blow, if only their theories could be understood and their pockets be filled, were as prolific and as sanguine as in every age.[17] But it would be as wearisome, and in regard to the history of human culture as superfluous, to dilate upon the technics of Targone and Giustianini, and the other engineers, Italian and Flemish, who amazed mankind at this period by their successes, still more by their failures, or to describe every assault, sortie, and repulse, every excavation, explosion, and cannonade, as to disinter the details of the siege of Nineveh or of Troy. But there is one kind of enginry which never loses its value or its interest, and which remains the same in every age—the machinery by which stout hearts act directly upon willing hands—and vast were the results now depending on its employment around Ostend.

On the outside and at a distance the war was superintended of course by the stadholder and commander-in-chief, while his cousin William Lewis, certainly inferior to no living man in the science of war, and whose studies in military literature, both ancient and modern, during the brief intervals of his active campaigning, were probably more profound than those of any contemporary, was always alert and anxious to assist with his counsels or to mount and ride to the fray.

In the town Sir Francis Vere commanded. Few shapes are more familiar to the student of those times than this

[17] Bentivoglio, Meteren, Fleming, Haestens, Gallucci, Grotius, *loc. cit. et passim, et mult. al.*

veteran campaigner, the offshoot of a time-honoured race. A man of handsome, weather-beaten, battle-bronzed visage, with massive forehead, broad intelligent eyes, a high straight nose, close-clipped hair, and a great brown beard like a spade; captious, irascible, but most resolute, he seemed, in his gold inlaid Milan corslet and ruff of point-lace, the very image of a partizan chieftain; one of the noblest relics of a race of fighters slowly passing off the world's stage.

An efficient colonel, he was not a general to be relied upon in great affairs either in council or the field. He hated the Nassaus, and the Nassaus certainly did not admire him, while his inordinate self-esteem, both personal and national, and his want of true sympathy for the cause in which he fought, were the frequent source of trouble and danger to the republic.

Of the seven or eight thousand soldiers in the town when the siege began, at least two thousand were English. The queen, too intelligent, despite her shrewishness to the States, not to be faithful to the cause in which her own interests were quite as much involved as theirs, had promised Envoy Caron that although she was obliged to maintain twenty thousand men in Ireland to keep down the rebels, directly leagued as they were with Spain and the archdukes, the republic might depend upon five thousand soldiers from England.[18] Detachment after detachment, the soldiers came as fast as the London prisons could be swept and the queen's press-gang perform its office. It may be imagined that the native land of those warriors was not inconsiderably benefited by the grant to the republic of the right to make and pay for these levies. But they had all red uniforms, and were as fit as other men to dig trenches, to defend them, and to fill them afterwards, and none could fight more manfully or plunder friend and foe with greater cheerfulness or impartiality than did those islanders.[19]

[18] Wagenaar, ix. 111.

[19] Fleming, *passim*, especially 53, 58, 101. *E. g.* "Arriveerden dien dach duysent niewe Engelsche soldaten die in Engellandt gheprest waren ende uyt alle de ghevanghenisse ghe-

The problem which the archduke had set himself to solve was not an easy one. He was to reduce a town, which he could invest and had already succeeded very thoroughly in investing on the land side, but which was open to the whole world by sea; while the besieged on their part could not only rely upon their own Government and people, who were more at home on the ocean than was any nation in the world, but upon their alliance with England, a State hardly inferior in maritime resources to the republic itself.

On the western side, which was the weakest, his progress was from the beginning the more encouraging, and his batteries were soon able to make some impression upon the outer works, and even to do considerable damage to the interior of the town. In the course of a few months he had fifty siege-guns in position, and had constructed a practicable road all around the place, connecting his own fortifications on the west and south with those of Bucquoy on the east.[20]

Albert's leading thought however was to cut off the supplies. The freaks of nature, as already observed, combined with his own exertions, had effectually disposed of the western harbour as a means of ingress. The tide ebbed and flowed through the narrow channel, but it was clogged with sand and nearly dry at low water. Moreover, by an invention then considered very remarkable, a foundation was laid for the besiegers' forts and batteries by sinking large and deep baskets of wicker-work, twenty feet in length, and filled with bricks and sand, within this abandoned harbour. These clumsy machines were called sausages,[21] and were the delight of the camp and of all Europe. The works thus established on the dry side crept slowly on towards the walls, and some demi-cannon were soon placed upon them, but the besieged, not liking these encroachments, took the resolution to cut the sea-dyke along the coast which had originally protected

licht, ghecleet met roode casacken," &c &c. p. 58.

[20] Bentivoglio, P. III. 505–509. Meteren, 455, 460. Grotii Hist. lib. x. Fleming, *passim*, for year 1601.

[21] Ibid.

the old harbour. Thus the sea, when the tides were high and winds boisterous, was free to break in upon the archduke's works, and would often swallow sausages, men, and cannon far more rapidly than it was possible to place them there. Yet still those human ants toiled on, patiently restoring what the elements so easily destroyed; and still, despite the sea, the cannonade, and the occasional sorties of the garrison, the danger came nearer and nearer. Bucquoy on the other side was pursuing the same system, but his task was immeasurably more difficult. The Gullet, or new eastern entrance, was a whirlpool at high tide, deep, broad, and swift as a mill-race. Yet along its outer verge he too laid his sausages, protecting his men at their work as well as he could with gabions, and essayed to build a dyke of wicker-work upon which he might place a platform for artillery to prevent the ingress of the republican ships.

And his soldiers were kept steadily at work, exposed all the time to the guns of the Spanish half-moon from which the besieged never ceased to cannonade those industrious pioneers. It was a bloody business. Night and day the men were knee-deep in the trenches delving in mud and sand, falling every instant into the graves which they were thus digging for themselves, while ever and anon the sea would rise in its wrath and sweep them with their works away. Yet the victims were soon replaced by others, for had not the cardinal-archduke sworn to extract the thorn from the Belgic lion's paw even if he should be eighteen years about it, and would military honour permit him to break his vow? It was a piteous sight, even for the besieged, to see human life so profusely squandered. It is a terrible reflection, too, that those Spaniards, Walloons, Italians, confronted death so eagerly, not from motives of honour, religion, discipline, not inspired by any kind of faith or fanaticism, but because the men who were employed in this horrible sausage-making and dyke-building were promised five stivers a day instead of two.[22]

[22] Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*

And there was always an ample supply of volunteers for the service so long as the five stivers were paid.

But despite all Bucquoy's exertions the east harbour remained as free as ever. The cool, wary Dutch skippers brought in their cargoes as regularly as if there had been no siege at all. Ostend was rapidly acquiring greater commercial importance, and was more full of bustle and business than had ever been dreamed of in that quiet nook since the days of Robert the Frisian, who had built the old church of Ostend, as one of the thirty which he erected in honour of St. Peter, five hundred years before.[23]

For the States did not neglect their favourite little city. Fleets of transports arrived day after day, week after week, laden with every necessary and even luxury for the use of the garrison. It was perhaps the cheapest place in all the Netherlands, so great was the abundance. Capons, hares, partridges, and butcher's meat were plentiful as blackberries, and good French claret was but two stivers the quart.[24] Certainly the prospect was not promising of starving the town into a surrender.

But besides all this digging and draining there was an almost daily cannonade. Her Royal Higness the Infanta was perpetually in camp by the side of her well-beloved Albert, making her appearance there in great state, with eighteen coaches full of ladies of honour, and always manifesting much impatience if she did not hear the guns.[25]

She would frequently touch off a forty-pounder with her own serene fingers in order to encourage the artillerymen, and great was the enthusiasm which such condescension excited.[26]

Assaults, sorties, repulses, ambuscades were also of daily occurrence, and often with very sanguinary results; but it would be almost as idle now to give the details of every encounter that occurred, as to describe the besieging of a snow-fort by schoolboys.

[23] Haestens, 81.
[24] Fleming.
[25] Meteren, 496.
[26] Ibid. 455vo, 460.

It is impossible not to reflect that a couple of Parrots and a *Monitor* or two would have terminated the siege in half an hour in favor of either party, and levelled the town or the besiegers' works as if they had been of pasteboard.

Bucquoy's dyke was within a thousand yards of the harbour's entrance, yet the guns on his platform never sank a ship nor killed a man on board,[27] while the archduke's batteries were even nearer their mark. Yet it was the most prodigious siege of modern days. Fifty great guns were in position around the place, and their balls weighed from ten to forty pounds apiece. It was generally agreed that no such artillery practice had ever occurred before in the world.[28]

For the first six months, and generally throughout the siege, there was fired on an average a thousand of such shots *a day*.[29] In the sieges of the American civil war there were sometimes three thousand shots *an hour*, and from guns compared to which in calibre and power those cannon and demi-cannon were but children's toys.[30]

Certainly the human arm was of the same length then as now, a pike-thrust was as effective as the stab of the most improved bayonet, and when it came, as it was always the purpose to do, to the close embrace of foemen, the work was done as thoroughly as it could be in this second half of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless it is impossible not to hope that such progress in science must at last render long wars impossible. The Dutch war of independence had already lasted nearly forty years. Had the civil war in America upon the territory of half a continent been waged with the Ostend machinery it might have lasted two centuries. Something then may have been gained for humanity by giving war such preter-human attributes as to make its demands of gold and blood too exhaustive to become chronic.

Yet the loss of human life during that summer and winter

[27] Fleming.
[28] Meteren, 455vo.
[29] Ibid.
[30] I have been informed that at the siege of Fort Fisher two hundred and forty shots were counted in three consecutive minutes—at the rate therefore of forty-eight hundred shots an hour—while at Ostend there was an average of eight shots per hour.

was sufficiently wholesale as compared with the meagre results. Blood flowed in torrents, for no man could be more free of his soldiers' lives than was the cardinal-archduke, hurling them as he did on the enemy's works before the pretence of a practical breach had been effected, and before a reasonable chance existed of purchasing an advantage at such a price. Five hundred were killed outright in half-an-hour's assault on an impregnable position one autumn evening, and lay piled in heaps beneath the Sand Hill fort—many youthful gallants from Spain and Italy among them, noble volunteers recognised by their perfumed gloves and golden chains, and whose pockets were worth rifling.[31] The Dutch surgeons, too, sallied forth in strength after such an encounter, and brought in great bags filled with human fat,[32] esteemed the sovereignst remedy in the world for wounds and disease.

August, 1601.

Leaders were killed on both sides. Catrici, chief of the Italian artillery, and Braccamonte, commander of a famous Sicilian legion, with many less-known captains, lost their lives before the town. The noble young Chatillon, grandson of Coligny, who had distinguished himself at Nieuport, fell in the Porcupine fort, his head carried off by a cannon-ball, which destroyed another officer at his side, and just grazed the ear of the distinguished Colonel Uchtenbroek. Sir Francis Vere, too, was wounded in the head by a fragment of iron, and was obliged to leave the town for six weeks till his wound should heal.

The unfortunate inhabitants—men, women, and children—were of course exposed to perpetual danger, and very many were killed. Their houses were often burned to the ground, in which cases the English auxiliaries were indefatigable, not in rendering assistance, but in taking possession of such household goods as the flames had spared. Nor did they always wait for such opportunities, but were apt, at the death of an eminent burgher, to constitute themselves at once universal legatees. Thus, while honest Bartholomew

[31] Haestens, 147

[32] Ibid.

Tysen, a worthy citizen grocer, was standing one autumn morning at his own door, a stray cannon-ball took off his head, and scarcely had he been put in a coffin before his house was sacked from garret to cellar and all the costly spices, drugs, and other valuable merchandize of his warehouse—the chief magazine in the town—together with all his household furniture, appropriated by those London warriors. Bartholomew's friends and relatives appealed to Sir Francis Vere for justice, but were calmly informed by that general that Ostend was like a stranded ship, on its beam-ends on a beach, and that it was impossible not to consider it at the mercy of the wreckers.[33] So with this highly figurative view of the situation from the lips of the governor of the place and the commander-in-chief of the English as well as the Dutch garrison, they were fain to go home and bury their dead, finding when they returned that another cannon-ball had carried away poor Bartholomew's coffin-lid.[34] Thus was never non-combatant and grocer, alive or dead, more out of suits with fortune than this citizen of Ostend; and such were the laws of war, as understood by one of the most eminent of English practitioners in the beginning of the seventeenth century. It is true, however, that Vere subsequently hanged a soldier for stealing fifty pounds of powder and another for uttering counterfeit money, but robberies upon the citizens were unavenged.

Nor did the deaths by shot or sword-stroke make up the chief sum of mortality. As usual, the murrain-like pestilence, which swept off its daily victims both within and without the town, was more effective than any direct agency of man. By the month of December the number of the garrison had been reduced to less than three thousand, while it is probable that the archduke had not eight thousand effective men left in his whole army.

It was a black and desolate scene. The wild waves of the German ocean, lashed by the wintry gales, would often sweep over the painfully constructed works of besieger and besieged

[33] Fleming, 53. [34] Ibid.

and destroy in an hour the labour of many weeks. The Porcupine—a small but vitally-important ravelin lying out in the counterscarp between the old town and the new, guarding the sluices by which the water for the town moats and canals was controlled, and preventing the pioneers of the enemy from undermining the western wall—was so damaged by the sea as to be growing almost untenable. Indefatigably had the besieged attempted with wicker-work and timber and palisades to strengthen this precious little fort, but they had found, even as Bucquoy and the archduke on their part had learned, that the North Sea in winter was not to be dammed by bulrushes. Moreover, in a bold and successful assault the besiegers had succeeded in setting fire to the inflammable materials heaped about the ravelin to such effect that the fire burned for days, notwithstanding the flooding of the works at each high tide.[35] The men, working day and night, scorching in the flames, yet freezing knee-deep in the icy slush of the trenches and perpetually under fire of the hostile batteries, became daily more and more exhausted, notwithstanding their determination to hold the place. Christmas drew nigh, and a most gloomy festival it was like to be; for it seemed as if the beleaguered garrison had been forgotten by the States. Weeks had passed away without a single company being sent to repair the hideous gaps made daily in the ranks of those defenders of a forlorn hope. It was no longer possible to hold the external works; the Square, the Polder, and the other forts on the south-west which Vere had constructed with so much care and where he had thus far kept his headquarters. On Sunday morning, 23rd December, he reluctantly gave orders that they should be abandoned on the following day and the whole garrison concentrated within the town.[36]

23 Dec. 1601.

The clouds were gathering darkly over the head of the gallant Vere; for no sooner had he arrived at this determination than he learned from a deserter that the archduke

[35] Meteren, Bentivoglio, Grotius, *ubi sup.* Fleming, 172

[36] Fleming, 171-188. Meteren, 460.

had fixed upon that very Sunday evening for a general assault upon the place. It was hopeless for the garrison to attempt to hold these outer forts, for they required a far larger number of soldiers than could be spared from the attenuated little army. Yet with those forts in the hands of the enemy there would be nothing left but to make the best and speediest terms that might be obtained. The situation was desperate. Sir Francis called his principal officers together, announced his resolve not to submit to the humiliation of a surrender after all their efforts, if there was a possibility of escape from their dilemma, reminded them that reinforcements might be expected to arrive at any moment, and that with even a few hundred additional soldiers the outer works might still be manned and the city saved. The officers English, Dutch, and French, listened respectfully to his remarks, but, without any suggestions on their own part, called on him as their Alexander to untie the Gordian knot.[37] Alexander solved it, not with the sword, but with a trick which he hoped might prove sharper than a sword. He announced his intention of proposing at once to treat, and to protract the negotiations as long as possible, until the wished-for sails should be discerned in the offing, when he would at once break faith with them, resume hostilities, and so make fools of the besiegers.

This was a device worthy of a modern Alexander whose surname was Farnese. Even in that loose age such cynical trifling with the sacredness of trumpets of truce and offers of capitulation were deemed far from creditable among soldiers and statesmen, yet the council of war highly applauded[38] the scheme, and importuned the general to carry it at once into effect.

[37] Fleming, *ubi sup.* It is expressly stated by Fleming that there was a regular council of war on this subject, so that Meteren, Grotius, and, after them, Wagenaar and others, are mistaken in saying that Vere was alone responsible for the stratagem. Bentivoglio does not seem aware that it was a trick. See Meteren, 455–460. Bentivoglio, P. III. 505–509. Grot. Hist. lib. x.

[38] Fleming, 178. "Die van de vergaderinge sijne intentie ghehoort hebbende wert by haer lieder hoochlich ghelaudeert," &c.

When it came, however, to selecting the hostages necessary for the proposed negotiations, they became less ardent and were all disposed to recede. At last, after much discussion, the matter was settled, and before nightfall a drummer was set upon the external parapet of the Porcupine, who forthwith began to beat vigorously for a parley. The rattle was a welcome sound in the ears of the weary besiegers, just drawn up in column for a desperate assault, and the tidings were at once communicated to the archduke in Fort St. Albert. The prince manifested at first some unwillingness to forego the glory of the attack, from which he confidently expected a crowning victory, but yielding to the representations of his chief generals that it was better to have his town without further bloodshed, he consented to treat. Hostages were expeditiously appointed on both sides, and Captains Ogle and Fairfax were sent that same evening to the headquarters of the besieging army. It was at once agreed as a preliminary that the empty outer works of the place should remain unmolested. The English officers were received with much courtesy. The archduke lifted his hat as they were presented, asked them of what nation they were, and then inquired whether they were authorized to agree upon terms of capitulation. They answered in the negative; adding, that the whole business would be in the hands of commissioners to be immediately sent by his Highness, as it was supposed, into the town. Albert then expressed the hope that there was no fraudulent intention in the proposition just made to negotiate. The officers professed themselves entirely ignorant of any contemplated deception; although Captain Ogle had been one of the council, had heard every syllable of Vere's stratagem, and had heartily approved of the whole plot. The Englishmen were then committed to the care of a Spanish nobleman of the duke's staff, and were treated with perfect politeness and hospitality.[39]

Sunday, 23 Dec. 1601.

[39] Meteren, Bentivoglio, Grotius, *ubi sup.*; but Fleming, 170–188, is by far the best authority, his diary recording every minute incident.

Meantime no time was lost in despatching hostages, who should be at the same time commissioners, to Ostend. The quartermaster-general of the army, Don Matteo Antonio, and Matteo Serrano, governor of Sluys, but serving among the besiegers, were selected for this important business as personages of ability, discretion, and distinction.[40]

They reached the town, coming in of course from the western side, as expeditiously as possible, but after nightfall. Before they arrived at headquarters there suddenly arose, from some unknown cause, a great alarm and beating to arms on the opposite or eastern side of the city. They were entirely innocent of any participation in this uproar and ignorant of its cause, but when they reached the presence of Sir Francis Vere they found that warrior in a towering passion. There was cheating going on, he exclaimed. The Spaniards, he cried, were taking advantage, by dishonourable stratagem, of these negotiations, and were about to assault the town.

Astounded, indignant, but utterly embarrassed, the grave Spaniards knew not how to reply. They were still more amazed when the general, rising to a still higher degree of exasperation, absolutely declined to exchange another word with them, but ordered Captains Carpentier and St. Hilaire, by whom they had been escorted to his quarters, to conduct them out of the town again by the same road which had brought them there. There was nothing for it but to comply, and to smother their resentment at such extraordinary treatment as best they could.[41] When they got to the old harbour on the western side the tide had risen so high that it was impossible to cross. Nobody knew better than Vere, when he gave the order, that this would be the case; so that when the escorting officers returned to state the fact, he simply ordered them to take the Spaniards back by the Gullet or eastern side. The strangers were not very young men, and being much fatigued with wandering to and fro in the darkness over the muddy roads, they begged permission to remain

[40] Fleming. [41] Ibid.

all night in Ostend, if it were only in a guardhouse. But Vere was inexorable, after the duplicity which he affected to have discovered on the part of the enemy. So the quartermaster-general and the governor of Sluys, much to the detriment of their dignity, were forced once more to tramp through the muddy streets. And obeying their secret instructions, the escort led them round and round through the most miry and forlorn parts of the town, so that, sinking knee-deep at every step into sloughs and quicksands, and plunging about through the mist and sleet of a dreary December's night, they at last reached the precincts of the Spanish half-moon on the Gullet, be-draggled from head to foot and in a most dismal and exhausted condition.

"Ah, the villainous town of Ostend!" exclaimed Serrano,[42] ruefully contemplating his muddy boots and imploring at least a pipe of tobacco. He was informed, however, that no such medical drugs were kept in the fort,[43] but that a draught of good English ale was much at their service.[44] The beer was brought in four foaming flagons, and, a little refreshed by this hospitality, the Spaniards were put in a boat and rowed under the guns of the fort across the Gullet and delivered to their own sentries on the outposts of Bucquoy's entrenchments. By this time it was midnight, so that it was necessary for them to remain for the night in the eastern encampment before reporting themselves at Fort St. Albert.

Thus far Vere's comedy had been eminently successful, and by taking advantage of the accidental alarm and so adroitly lashing himself into a fictitious frenzy, the general had gained nearly twenty-four additional hours of precious time on which he had not reckoned.

Next morning, after Serrano and Antonio had reported to the archduke, it was decided, notwithstanding the very inhospitable treatment which they had received, that those com-

[42] Fleming, 181. "Ah la mechante ville d'Oostende," &c.

[43] Ibid, Gelijck t'selfe quartier beter met bier dan met medicinale drooghen." It is interesting to know that two centuries and a half ago a pipe of tobacco was considered as medicine by Dutchmen.

[44] Ibid.

missioners should return to their labours. Ogle and Fairfax still remained as hostages in camp, and of course professed entire ignorance of these extraordinary proceedings, attributing them to some inexplicable misunderstanding. So on Monday, 24th December, the quartermaster and the governor again repaired to Ostend with orders to bring about the capitulation of the place as soon as possible. The same sergeant-major was again appointed by Vere to escort the strangers, and on asking by what way he should bring them in, was informed by Sir Francis that it would never do to allow those gentlemen, whose feet were accustomed to the soft sand of the sea-beach and downs, to bruise themselves upon the hard paving-stones of Ostend, but that the softest and muddiest road must be carefully selected for them.[45] These reasons accordingly were stated with perfect gravity to the two Spaniards, who, in spite of their solemn remonstrances, were made to repeat a portion of their experiences and to accept it as an act of special courtesy from the English general.[46] Thus so much time had been spent in preliminaries and so much more upon the road that the short winter's day was drawing to a close before they were again introduced to the presence of Vere.

Monday, 24 Dec. 1601.

They found that fiery personage on this occasion all smiles and blandishments. The Spaniards were received with most dignified courtesy, to which they gravely responded; and the general then proceeded to make excuses for the misunderstanding of the preceding day with its uncomfortable consequences. Thereupon arose much animated discussion as to the causes and the nature of the alarm on the east side which had created such excitement. Much time was ingeniously consumed in this utterly superfluous discussion; but at last the commissioners of the archduke insisted on making allusion to the business which had brought them to the town. "What terms of negotiation do you propose?" they asked Sir

[45] Fleming, 182. [46] Ibid.

Francis. "His Highness has only to withdraw from before Ostend," coolly replied the general, "and leave us, his poor neighbours, in peace and quietness. This would be the most satisfactory negotiation possible and the one most easily made."

Serrano and Antonio found it difficult to see the matter in that cheerful light, and assured Sir Francis that they had not been commissioned by the archduke to treat for his own withdrawal but for the surrender of the town. Hereupon high words and fierce discussion very naturally arose, and at last, when a good deal of time had been spent in the sharp encounter of wits, Vere proposed an adjournment of the discussion until after supper; politely expressing the hope that the Spanish gentlemen would be his guests.

The conversation had been from the beginning in French, as Vere, although a master of the Spanish language, was desirous that the rest of the company present should understand everything said at the interview.[47]

The invitation to table was graciously accepted, and the Christmas eve passed off more merrily than the preceding night had done, so far as Vere's two guests were concerned. Several distinguished officers were present at the festive board: Captain Montesquieu de Roquette, Sir Horace Vere, Captains St. Hilaire, Meetkerke, De Ryck, and others among them.[48] As it was strict fast for the Catholics that evening—while on the other hand the English, still reckoning according to the old style, would not keep Christmas until ten days later—the banquet consisted mainly of eggs and fish, and the like meagre articles, in compliment to the guests. It was, however, as well furnished as could be expected in a beleaguered town, out of whose harbour a winter gale had been for many weeks blowing and preventing all ingress. There was at least no lack of excellent Bordeaux wine, while the servants waiting upon the table did not fail to observe that Governor Serrano was not in all respects a

[47] Fleming, 170–188. [48] Ibid.

model of the temperance usually characteristic of his race. They carefully counted and afterwards related with admiration, not unmingled with horror, that the veteran Spaniard drank fifty-two goblets of claret, and was emptying his glass as fast as filled, although by no means neglecting the beer, the quality of which he had tested the night before at the Half-moon.[49] Yet there seemed to be no perceptible effect produced upon him, save perhaps that he grew a shade more grave and dignified with each succeeding daught.[50] For while the banquet proceeded in this very genial manner business was by no means neglected ; the negotiations for the surrender of the city[51] being conducted on both sides with a fuddled solemnity very edifying for the attendants to contemplate.

Vere complained that the archduke was unreasonable, for he claimed nothing less from his antagonists than their all. The commissioners replied that all was no more than his own property. It certainly could not be thought unjust of him to demand his own, and all Flanders was his by legal donation from his Majesty of Spain. Vere replied that he had never studied jurisprudence, and was not versed at all in that science, but he had always heard in England that possession was nine points of the law. Now it so happened that they, and not his Highness, were in possession of Ostend, and it would be unreasonable to expect them to make a present of it to any one. The besiegers, he urged, had gained much honour by their steady persistence amid so many dangers, difficulties, and losses ; but winter had come, the weather was very bad, not a step of progress had been made, and he was bold enough to express his opinion that it would be far more sensible on the part of his Highness, after such deeds of valour, to withdraw his diminished forces out of the freezing and pestilential swamps before Ostend and go into comfortable winter-quarters at Ghent or Bruges. Enough had been done for glory, and it must certainly now be manifest that he had no chance of taking the city.

[49] Fleming, 183. [50] Ibid. [51] Ibid.

Serrano retorted that it was no secret to the besiegers that the garrison had dwindled to a handful; that it was quite impossible for them to defend their outer works any longer; that with the loss of the external boulevard the defence of the place would be impossible, and that, on the contrary, it was for the republicans to resign themselves to their fate. They, too, had done enough for glory, and had nothing for it but to retire into the centre of their ruined little nest, where they must burrow until the enemy should have leisure to entirely unearth them, which would be a piece of work very easily and rapidly accomplished.[52]

This was called negotiation; and thus the winter's evening wore away, until the Spaniards, heavy with fatigue and wine, were without much difficulty persuaded to seek the couches prepared for them.[53]

Next day the concourse of people around the city was wonderful to behold. The rumour had spread through the provinces, and was on the wing to all foreign countries, that Ostend had capitulated, and that the commissioners were at that moment arranging the details. The cardinal-archduke, in complete Milanese armour, with a splendid feather-bush waving from his casque and surrounded by his brilliant body-guard, galloped to and fro outside the entrenchments, expecting every moment a deputation to come forth, bearing the keys of the town. The Infanta too, magnificent in ruff and farthingale and brocaded petticoat, and attended by a cavalcade of ladies of honour in gorgeous attire, pranced impatiently about, awaiting the dramatic termination of a leaguer which was becoming wearisome to besieger and besieged.[54] Not even on the famous second of July of the previous year, when that princess was pleasing herself with imaginations as to the deportment of Maurice of Nassau as a captive, had her soul been so full of anticipated triumph as on this Christmas morning.

Christmas, 1601.

[52] Fleming, 181, *seqq.*

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid, *ubi sup.* Compare Bentivoglio, Meteren, Grotius, *ubi sup.*

Such a festive scene as was now presented in the neighbourhood of Ostend had not been exhibited for many a long year in Flanders. From the whole country side came the peasants and burghers, men, women, and children, in holiday attire. It was like a kermiss or provincial fair.[55] Three thousand people at least were roaming about in all directions, gaping with wonder at the fortifications of the besieging army, so soon to be superfluous, sliding, skating, waltzing on the ice, admiring jugglers, dancing bears, puppet shows and merry-go-rounds, singing, and carousing upon herrings, sausages, waffles, with mighty draughts of Flemish ale, manifesting their exuberant joy that the thorn was nearly extracted from the lion's paw, and awaiting with delight a blessed relief from that operation.[56] Never was a merrier Christmas morning in Flanders. There should be an end now to the forays through the country of those red-coated English pikemen, those hard-riding, hard-drinking troopers of Germany and Holland, with the French and Scotch arquebus men, and terrible Zeeland sailors who had for years swept out of Ostend, at any convenient opportunity, to harry the whole province. And great was the joy in Flanders.

Meantime within the city a different scene was enacting. Those dignified Spaniards—governor Serrano and Don Matteo Antonio—having slept off their carouse, were prepared after breakfast next morning to resume the interrupted negotiations. But affairs were now to take an unexpected turn. In the night the wind had changed, and in the course of the forenoon three Dutch vessels of war were descried in the offing, and soon calmly sailed into the mouth of the Gullet. The news was at once brought to Vere's headquarters. That general's plans had been crowned with success even sooner than he expected. There was no further object in continuing the comedy of negotiation, for the ships now arriving seemed crowded with troops. Sir Francis accordingly threw off the mask, and assuring his guests with extreme politeness that it

[55] Fleming. [56] Ibid.

had given him great pleasure to make the acquaintance of such distinguished personages, he thanked them cordially for their visit, but regretted that it would be no longer in his power to entertain any propositions of a pacific nature. The necessary reinforcements, which he had been so long expecting, had at last reached him, and it would not yet be necessary for him to retire into his ruined nest. Military honour therefore would not allow him to detain them any longer. Should he ever be so hard pressed again he felt sure that so magnanimous a prince as his Highness would extend to him all due clemency and consideration.[57]

The Spaniards, digesting as they best could the sauce of contumely with which the gross treachery of the transaction was now seasoned, solemnly withdrew, disdaining to express their spleen in words of idle menace.

They were escorted back through the lines, and at once made their report at headquarters. The festival had been dismally interrupted before it was well begun. The vessels were soon observed by friend and foe making their way triumphantly up to the town where they soon dropped anchor at the wharf of the inner Gullet, having only a couple of sailors wounded, despite all the furious discharges of Bucquoy's batteries. The holiday makers dispersed, much discomfited, the English hostages returned to the town, and the archduke shut himself up, growling and furious. His generals and counsellors, who had recommended the abandonment of his carefully prepared assault, and acceptance of the perfidious propositions to negotiate, by which so much golden time had been squandered, were for several days excluded from his presence.[58]

Meantime the army, disappointed, discontented, half-starved, unpaid, passed their days and nights as before, in the sloppy trenches, while deep and earnest were the complaints and the curses which succeeded to the momentary exultation of Christmas eve. The soldiers were more than ever

[57] Fleming.
[58] Ibid. Compare Bentivoglio, Meteren, Grotius, *ubi sup.*, *et mult. al.*

embittered against their august commander-in-chief, for they had just enjoyed a signal opportunity of comparing the luxury and comfortable magnificence of his Highness and the Infanta, and of contrasting it with their own misery. Moreover, it had long been exciting much indignation in the ranks that veteran generals and colonels, in whom all men had confidence, had been in great numbers superseded in order to make place for court favourites, utterly without experience or talent.[59] Thus the veterans; murmuring in the wet trenches. The archduke meanwhile, in his sullen retirement, brooded over a tragedy to follow the very successful comedy of his antagonist.

It was not long delayed. The assault which had been postponed in the latter days of December was to be renewed before the end of the first week of the new year. Vere, through scouts and deserters, was aware of the impending storm, and had made his arrangements in accordance with the very minute information which he had thus received. The reinforcements, so opportunely sent by the States, were not numerous—only six hundred in all—but they were an earnest of fresh comrades to follow. Meantime they sufficed to fill the gaps in the ranks, and to enable Vere to keep possession of the external line of fortifications, including the all-important Porcupine. Moreover, during the fictitious negotiations, while the general had thus been holding—as he expressed it—the wolf by both ears, the labor of repairing damages in dyke, moat, and wall had not been for an instant neglected.

The morning of the 7th January, 1602, opened with a vigorous cannonade from all the archduke's batteries, east, west, and south. Auditor Fleming, counsellor and secretary of the city, aide-de-camp and right hand of the commander-in-chief, a grim, grizzled, leathern-faced man of fifty, steady under fire as a veteran arquebuseer, 7 January, 1602.

[59] Fleming gives more than one scurrilous letter found in the pockets of dead Spanish soldiers, in which very opprobrious epithets are applied to the sovereign of the obedient Netherlands. See in particular p. 164.

ready with his pen as a counting-house clerk, and as fertile in resource as the most experienced campaigner, was ever at the general's side. At his suggestion several houses had been demolished, to furnish materials in wood and iron to stop the gaps as soon as made. Especially about the Sand Hill fort and the Porcupine a plentiful supply was collected, no time having been lost in throwing up stockades, palisades, and every other possible obstruction to the expected assailants. Knowing perfectly well where the brunt of the battle was to be, Vere had placed his brother Sir Horace at the head of twelve picked companies of diverse nations in the Sand Hill. Four of the very best companies of the garrison were stationed in the Porcupine, and ten more of the choicest in Fort Hell's Mouth, under Colonel Meetkerke. It must be recollected that the first of these three works was the key to the fortifications of the old or outer town. The other two were very near it, and were the principal redoubts which defended the most exposed and vulnerable portion of the new town on the western side. The Sand Hill, as its name imported, was the only existing relic within the city's verge of the chain of downs once encircling the whole place. It had however been cannonaded so steadily during the six months' siege as to have become almost ironclad—a mass of metal gradually accumulating from the enemy's guns. With the curtain extending from it towards east and west it protected the old town quite up to the little ancient brick church, one of the only two in Ostend.[60]

All day long the cannon thundered—a bombardment such as had never before been dreamed of in those days, two thousand shots having been distinctly counted by the burghers. There was but languid response from the besieged, who were reserving their strength. At last, to the brief winter's day succeeded a pitch-dark evening. It was dead low tide at seven. At that hour the drums suddenly

[60] Fleming's Diary, pp. 187–199, is by far the best authority for this assault. He gives many plans, diagrams, and pictures. compare Grot. Hist. lib. xi. 595–597. Meteren, 460vo Bentivoglio, 510. Wagenaar, ix. 114, 115.

beat alarm along the whole line of fortifications from the Gullet on the east to the old harbour on the west, while through the mirky atmosphere sounded the trumpets of the assault, the shouts of the Spanish and Italian commanders, and the fierce responsive yells of their troops. Sir Francis, having visited every portion of the works, and satisfied himself that every man in the garrison was under arms, and that all his arrangements had been fulfilled, now sat on horseback, motionless as a statue, within the Sand Hill. Among the many serious and fictitious attacks now making he waited calmly for the one great assault, even allowing some of the enemy to scale the distant counterscarp of the external works towards the south, which he had by design left insufficiently guarded. It was but a brief suspense, for in a few moments two thousand men had rushed through the bed of the old harbour, out of which the tide had ebbed, and were vigorously assailing the Sand Hill and the whole length of its curtain. The impenetrable darkness made it impossible to count, but the noise and the surging fury of the advance rendered it obvious that the critical moment had arrived. Suddenly a vivid illumination burst forth. Great pine torches, piles of tar-barrels, and heaps of other inflammable material, which had been carefully arranged in Fort Porcupine, were now all at once lighted by Vere's command.[61] As the lurid blaze flashed far and wide there started out of the gloom not only the long lines of yellow-jerkined pikemen and arquebuseers, with their storm-hoods and scaling ladders, rushing swiftly towards the forts, but beyond the broken sea-dyke the reserved masses supporting the attack, drawn up in solid clumps of spears, with their gay standards waving above them, and with a strong force of cavalry in iron corslet and morion stationed in the rear to urge on the infantry and prevent their faltering in the night's work, became visible—phantom-like but perfectly distinct.

At least four thousand men were engaged in this chief attack, and the light now permitted the besieged to direct

[61] Fleming, *ubi sup.*

their fire from cannon, demi-cannon, culverin, and snaphance, with fatal effect. The assailants, thinned, straggling, but undismayed, closed up their ranks, and still came fiercely on. Never had Spaniards, Walloons, or Italians, manifested greater contempt of death than on this occasion. They knew that the archduke and the infanta were waiting breathlessly in Fort St. Albert for the news of that victory of which the feigned negotiations had defrauded them at Christmas, and they felt perfectly confident of ending both the siege and the forty years' war this January night. But they had reckoned without their wily English host. As they came nearer—van, and at last reserve—they dropped in great heaps under the steady fire of the musketry—as Philip Fleming, looking on, exclaimed—like apples when the autumn wind blows through the orchard. And as the foremost still pressed nearer and nearer, striving to clamber up the shattered counterscarp and through every practicable breach, the English, Hollanders, and Zeelanders, met them in the gap, not only at push of pike, but with their long daggers and with flaming pitch-hoops, and hurled them down to instant death.

And thus around the Sand Hill, the Porcupine, and Hell's Mouth, the battle raged nearly two hours long, without an inch of ground being gained by the assailants. The dead and dying were piled beneath the walls, while still the reserves, goaded up to the mark by the cavalry, mounted upon the bodies of their fallen comrades and strove to plant their ladders.[62] But now the tide was on the flood, the harbour was filling, and cool Auditor Fleming, whom nothing escaped, quietly asked the general's permission to open the western sluice. It was obvious, he observed, that the fury of the attack was over, and that the enemy would soon be effecting a retreat before the water should have risen too high. He even pointed out many stragglers attempting to escape through the already deepening shallows. Vere's consent was at once given, the flood-gate was opened, and the assailants —such as still survived—panic-struck in a moment, rushed

[62] Fleming, *ubi sup.*

wildly back through the old harbour towards their camp. It was too late. The waters were out, and the contending currents whirled the fugitives up and down through the submerged land, and beyond the broken dyke, until great numbers of them were miserably drowned in the haven, while others were washed out to sea. Horses and riders were borne off towards the Zeeland coast, and several of their corpses were picked up days afterwards in the neighbourhood of Flushing.[63]

Meantime those who had effected a lodgment in the Polder, the Square, and the other southern forts, found, after the chief assault had failed, that they had gained nothing by their temporary triumph but the certainty of being butchered. Retreat was impossible, and no quarter was given. Count Imbec, a noble of great wealth, offered his weight in gold for his ransom,[64] but was killed by a private soldier, who preferred his blood, or doubted his solvency. Durango, marshal of the camp, Don Alvarez de Suarez, and Don Matteo Antonio, sergeant-major and quarter-master-general, whose adventures as a hostage within the town on Christmas eve have so recently been related, were also slain.

On the eastern side Bucquoy's attack was an entire failure. His arrangements were too slowly made, and before he could bring his men to the assault the water was so high in the Gullet that they refused to lay their pontoons and march to certain death. Only at lowest ebb, and with most exquisite skill in fording, would it have been possible to effect anything like an earnest demonstration or a surprise. Moreover some of the garrison, giving themselves out as

Jan. 7.

[63] The historians Bentivoglio, Grotius, and many others give Vere, as a matter of course, the credit of this feat. But these are the words of Auditor Fleming himself, a man whom I should judge incapable of falsehood:—"Hebbe my vervordert den Generael te bidden dat hy my gheliefde te autoriseren ende West Sluyse te doen openen hem remonstrerende gelijck den Vyand sijn voornemen tot ghenen goeden effecte conde gebrenghen als oock dat sijn volck van den furieusen aenval begosten den moet te verliesen, haer lieder retraicte wederom door die onde West haven soude moeten nemen ende dat alsdan die spoelinghe vant water haer lieder inde Zee soude drijven waer over den voornoemden Generael my gheauthoriseert heeft die sluysen te doen openen."—pp. 195, 196

[64] Haestens, 199.

deserters, stole out of the Spanish Half-moon, which had been purposely almost denuded of its defenders, towards the enemy's entrenchments, and offered to lead a body of Spaniards into that ravelin. Bucquoy fell into the trap, so that the detachment, after a victory as easily effected as that in the southern forts, found themselves when the fight was over not the captors but the caught. A few attempted to escape and were driven into the sea ; the rest were massacred.

Fifteen hundred of the enemy's dead were counted and registered by Auditor Fleming.[65] The whole number of the slain and drowned was reckoned as high as two thousand, which was at least a quarter of the whole besieging army. And so ended this winter night's assault, by which the archduke had fondly hoped to avenge himself for Vere's perfidy, and to terminate the war at a blow. Only sixty of the garrison were killed, and Sir Horace Vere was wounded.[66]

The winter now set in with severe sleet, and snow, and rain, and furious tempests lashing the sea over the works of besieger and besieged, and for weeks together paralyzing all efforts of either army. Eight weary months the siege had lasted ; the men in town and hostile camp, exposed to the inclemency of the wintry trenches, sinking faster before the pestilence which now swept impartially through all ranks than the soldiers of the archduke had fallen at Nieuport, or in the recent assault on the Sand Hill. Of seven thousand hardly three thousand now remained in the garrison.[67]

Yet still the weary sausage making and wooden castle building went on along the Gullet and around the old town. The Bredené dyke crept on inch by inch, but the steady ships of the republic came and went unharmed by the batteries with which Bucquoy hoped to shut up the New Harbour. The archduke's works were pushed up nearer on the west, but, as yet, not one practical advantage had been gained, and the siege had scarcely advanced a hair's breadth

[65] Fleming, 197.

[66] Ibid. 187–199. Compare Bentivoglio, Grotius, Meteren, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.*

[67] Grotius, xi. 590.

since the 5th of July of the preceding year, when the armies had first sat down before the place.

The stormy month of March had come, and Vere, being called to service in the field for the coming season, transferred the command at Ostend to Frederic van Dorp, a rugged, hard-headed, ill-favoured, stout-hearted Zeeland colonel, with the face of a bull-dog, and with the tenacious grip of one.[68]

[68] Fleming, 212, 215.

CHAPTER XL.

Protraction of the siege of Ostend — Spanish invasion of Ireland — Prince Maurice again on the march — Siege of Grave — State of the archduke's army — Formidable mutiny — State of Europe — Portuguese expedition to Java — Foundation there of the first Batavian trading settlement — Exploits of Jacob Heemskerk — Capture of a Lisbon carrack — Progress of Dutch commerce—Oriental and Germanic republics—Commercial embassy from the King of Atsgen in Sumatra to the Netherlands — Surrender of Grave — Privateer work of Frederic Spinola — Destruction of Spinola's fleet by English and Dutch cruisers — Continuation of the siege of Ostend — Fearful hurricane and its effects — The attack — Capture of external forts — Encounter between Spinola and a Dutch squadron — Execution of prisoners by the archduke — Philip Fleming and his diary — Continuation of operations before Ostend — Spanish veterans still mutinous — Their capital besieged by Van den Berg — Maurice marches to their relief — Convention between the prince and the mutineers — Great commercial progress of the Dutch — Opposition to international commerce — Organization of the Universal East India Company.

IT would be desirable to concentrate the chief events of the siege of Ostend so that they might be presented to the reader's view in a single mass. But this is impossible. The siege was essentially the war—as already observed—and it was bidding fair to protract itself to such an extent that a respect for chronology requires the attention to be directed for a moment to other topics.

The invasion of Ireland under Aquila, so pompously heralded as almost to suggest another grand armada, had sailed in the beginning of the winter, and an army of six thousand men had been landed at Kinsale. Rarely had there been a better opportunity for the Celt to strike for his independence. Shane Mac Neil had an army on foot with which he felt confident of exterminating the Saxon oppressor, even without the assistance of his peninsular allies, while the queen's army, severely drawn upon as it had been for the exigencies of Vere and the States, might be supposed unable

to cope with so formidable a combination. Yet Montjoy made short work of Aquila and Tyrone. The invaders, shut up in their meagre conquest, became the besieged instead of the assailants. Tyrone made a feeble attempt to relieve his Spanish allies, but was soon driven into his swamps, the peasants would not rise, in spite of proclamations and golden mountains of promise, and Aquila was soon glad enough to sign a capitulation by which he saved a portion of his army. He then returned, in transports provided by the English general, a much discomfited man, to Spain, January, 1602. instead of converting Ireland into a province of the universal empire.[1] He had not rescued Hibernia, as he stoutly proclaimed at the outset his intention of doing, from the jaws of the evil demon.[2]

The States, not much wiser after the experience of Nieuport, were again desirous that Maurice should march into Flanders, relieve Ostend, and sweep the archduke into the sea. As for Vere, he proposed that a great army of cavalry and infantry should be sent into Ostend, while another force equally powerful should take the field as soon as the season permitted. Where the men were to be levied, and whence the funds for putting such formidable hosts in motion were to be derived, it was not easy to say. "'Tis astonishing," said Lewis William, "that the evils already suffered cannot open his eyes; but after all, 'tis no marvel. An old and good colonel, as I hold him to be, must go to school before he can become a general, and we must beware of committing any second folly, govern ourselves according to our means and the art of war, and leave the rest to God."[3]

Prince Maurice, however, yielding as usual to the persuasions or importunities of those less sagacious than himself, and being also much influenced by the advice of the English queen and the French king, after reviewing the most splendid army that even he had ever euqipped and set in the field, crossed the Waal at Nymegen, and the 22 June, 1602.

[1] Meteren, 458, *seqq.* Grot. x. 593. [2] Grotius, *ubi sup.*
[3] Groen v. Prinsterer. Archives, 2nd Series, ii. 111

Meuse at Mook, and then moving leisurely along Meuse-side by way of Sambeck, Blitterswyck, and Maasyk, came past St. Truyden to the neighbourhood of Thienen, in Brabant.[4] Here he stood, in the heart of the enemy's country, and within a day's march of Brussels. The sanguine portion of his countrymen and the more easily alarmed of the enemy already thought it would be an easy military promenade for the stadholder to march through Brabant and Flanders to the coast, defeat the Catholic forces before Ostend, raise the weary siege of that place, dictate peace to the archduke, and return in triumph to the Hague, before the end of the summer.

But the experienced Maurice too well knew the emptiness of such dreams. He had a splendid army—eighteen thousand foot and five thousand horse—of which Lewis William commanded the battalia, Vere the right, and Count Ernest the left, with a train of two thousand baggage wagons, and a considerable force of sutlers and camp-followers. He moved so deliberately, and with such excellent discipline, that his two wings could with ease be expanded for black-mail or forage over a considerable extent of country, and again folded together in case of sudden military necessity. But he had no intention of marching through Brussels, Ghent, and Bruges, to the Flemish coast. His old antagonist, the Admiral of Arragon, lay near Thienen in an entrenched camp, with a force of at least fifteen thousand men, while the archduke, leaving Rivas in command before Ostend, hovered in the neighbourhood of Brussels, with as many troops as could be spared from the various Flemish garrisons, ready to support the admiral.[5]

But Maurice tempted the admiral in vain with the chances of a general action. That warrior, remembering perhaps too distinctly his disasters at Nieuport, or feeling conscious that his military genius was more fitly displayed in burning towns and villages in neutral territory, robbing the peasantry, plundering gentlemen's castles and murdering the

[4] Meteren, 469, *seqq.* Van der Kemp, ii. 98, 99, and notes. Bentivoglio, P. III. 517. Wagenaar, ix. 119, *seqq.* [5] Same authorities.

proprietors, than it was like to be in a pitched battle with the first general of the age, remained sullenly within his entrenchments. His position was too strong and his force far too numerous to warrant an attack by the stadholder upon his works. After satisfying himself, therefore, that there was no chance of an encounter in Brabant except at immense disadvantage, Maurice rapidly counter-marched towards the lower Meuse, and on the 18th July laid siege to Grave. The position and importance of this city have been thoroughly set before the reader in a former volume.[6] It is only necessary, therefore, to recal the fact that, besides being a vital possession for the republic, the place was in law the private property of the Orange family, having been a portion of the estate of Count de Buren, afterwards redeemed on payment of a considerable sum of money by his son-in-law, William the Silent, confirmed to him at the pacification of Ghent, and only lost to his children by the disgraceful conduct of Captain Hamart, which had cost that officer his head. Maurice was determined at least that the place should not now slip through his fingers, and that the present siege should be a masterpiece. His forts, of which he had nearly fifty, were each regularly furnished with moat, drawbridge, and bulwark. His counterscarp and parapet, his galleries, covered ways and mines, were as elaborate, massive, and artistically finished as if he were building a city instead of besieging one. Buzanval, the French envoy, amazed at the spectacle, protested that his works "were rather worthy of the grand Emperor of the Turks than of a little commonwealth, which only existed through the disorder of its enemies and the assistance of its friends;" but he admitted the utility of the stadholder's proceedings to be very obvious.[7]

18 July, 1602.

While the prince calmly sat before Grave, awaiting the inexorable hour for burghers and garrison to surrender, the great Francis Mendoza, Admiral of Arragon, had been completing the arrangements for his exchange. A prisoner

[6] See vol. II. of this work, chap. ix. [7] Groen v. Prinsterer. Archives, ii. 153.

after the Nieuport battle, he had been assigned by Maurice, as will be recollected, to his cousin, young Lewis Gunther, whose brilliant services as commander of the cavalry had so much contributed to the victory. The amount of ransom for so eminent a captive could not fail to be large, and accordingly the thrifty Lewis William had congratulated his brother on being able, although so young, thus to repair the fortunes of the family by his military industry to a greater extent than had yet been accomplished by any of the race. Subsequently, the admiral had been released on parole, the sum of his ransom having been fixed at nearly one hundred thousand Flemish crowns. By an agreement now made by the States, with consent of the Nassau family, the prisoner was definitely released, on condition of effecting the exchange of all prisoners of the republic, now held in durance by Spain in any part of the world.[8] This was in lieu of the hundred thousand crowns which were to be put into the impoverished coffers of Lewis Gunther. It may be imagined, as the hapless prisoners afterwards poured in—not only from the peninsula, but from more distant regions, whither they had been sent by their cruel taskmasters, some to relate their sufferings in the horrible dungeons of Spain, where they had long been expiating the crime of defending their fatherland, others to relate their experiences as chained galley-slaves in the naval service of their bitterest enemies, many with shorn heads and long beards like Turks, many with crippled limbs, worn out with chains and blows, and the squalor of disease and filth[9]—that the hatred for Spain and Rome did not glow any less fiercely within the republic, nor the hereditary love for the Nassaus, to whose generosity these poor victims were indebted for their deliverance, become fainter, in consequence of these revelations. It was at first vehemently disputed by many that the admiral could be exchanged as a prisoner of war, in respect to the manifold murders and other crimes which would seem to authorize his trial and chastisement by the tribunals of the republic. But it was decided by the States

[8] Meteren, 449ᵛᵒ, 470. Grotius, xi. 528, 599.

[9] Grotius, *ubi sup.*

that the sacred ægis of military law must be held to protect even so bloodstained a criminal as he, and his release was accordingly effected.[10] Not long afterwards he took his departure for Spain, where his reception was not enthusiastic.

From this epoch is to be dated a considerable reform in the laws regulating the exchange of prisoners of war.[11]

While Maurice was occupied with the siege of Grave, and thus not only menacing an important position, but spreading danger and dismay over all Brabant and Flanders, it was necessary for the archduke to detach so large a portion of his armies to observe his indefatigable and scientific enemy, as to much weaken the vigour of the operations before Ostend. Moreover, the execrable administration of his finances, and the dismal delays and sufferings of that siege, had brought about another mutiny—on the whole, the most extensive, formidable, and methodical of all that had hitherto occurred in the Spanish armies.[12]

By midsummer, at least three thousand five hundred veterans, including a thousand of excellent cavalry, the very best soldiers in the service, had seized the city of Hoogstraaten. Here they established themselves securely, and strengthened the fortifications; levying contributions in corn, cattle, and every other necessary, besides wine, beer, and pocket-money, from the whole country round with exemplary regularity. As usual, disorder assumed the forms of absolute order. Anarchy became the best organized of governments, and it would have been difficult to find in the world—outside the Dutch commonwealth—a single community where justice appeared to be so promptly administered as in this temporary republic, founded upon rebellion and theft.

For, although a brotherhood of thieves, it rigorously punished such of its citizens as robbed for their own, not for the public good. The immense booty swept daily from the granges, castles, and villages of Flanders was divided with

[10] "Non visum Ordinibus in captivum belli jure munitum judicia exercere." —Grotius, *ubi sup.*

[11] Ibid.

[12] Bentivoglio, iii. 517. Meteren, 470–472. Grotius, xi. 604–606.

the simplicity of early Christians, while the success and steadiness of the operations paralyzed their sovereign, and was of considerable advantage to the States.

Albert endeavoured in vain to negotiate with the rebels. Nuncius Frangipani went to them in person, but was received with calm derision. Pious exhortations might turn the keys of Paradise, but gold alone, he was informed, would unlock the gates of Hoogstraaten. In an evil hour the cardinal-archduke was tempted to try the effect of sacerdotal thunder. The ex-archbishop of Toledo could not doubt that the terrors of the Church would make those brown veterans tremble who could confront so tranquilly the spring-tides of the North Sea, and the batteries of Vere and Nassau. So he launched a manifesto, as highly spiced as a pamphlet of Marnix, and as severe as a sentence of Torquemada. Entirely against the advice of the States-General of the obedient provinces, he denounced the mutineers as outlaws and accursed. He called on persons of every degree to kill any of them in any way, at any time, or in any place, promising that the slayer of a private soldier should receive a reward of ten crowns for each head brought in, while for a subaltern officer's head one hundred crowns were offered, for that of a superior officer two hundred, and for that of the Eletto or chief magistrate, five hundred crowns. Should the slayer be himself a member of the mutiny, his crime of rebellion was to be forgiven, and the price of murder duly paid. All judges, magistrates, and provost-marshals were ordered to make inventories of the goods, moveable and immoveable, of the mutineers, and of the clothing and other articles belonging to their wives and children, all which property was to be brought in and deposited in the hands of the proper functionaries of the archduke's camp, in order that it might be duly incorporated into the domains of his Highness.[13]

The mutineers were not frightened. The ban was an anachronism. If those Spaniards and Italians had learned nothing by their much campaigning in the land of Cal-

[13] "Om alle de selve te doen incorporeren aen onse Domeynen."—Met. 471.

vinism, they had at least unlearned their faith in bell, book, and candle. It happened, too, that among their numbers were to be found pamphleteers as ready and as unscrupulous as the scribes of the archduke.

So there soon came forth and was published to the world, in the name of the Eletto and council of Hoogstraaten, a formal answer to the ban.[14]

"If scolding and cursing be payment," said the magistrates of the mutiny, "then we might give a receipt in full for our wages. The ban is sufficient in this respect; but as these curses give no food for our bellies nor clothes for our backs, not preventing us, therefore, who have been fighting so long for the honour and welfare of the archdukes from starving with cold and hunger, we think a reply necessary in order to make manifest how much reason these archdukes have for thundering forth all this choler and fury, by which women and children may be frightened, but at which no soldier will feel alarm.

"When it is stated," continued the mutineers, "that we have deserted our banners just as an attempt was making by the archduke to relieve Grave, we can only reply that the assertion proves how impossible it is to practise arithmetic with disturbed brains. Passion is a bad schoolmistress for the memory, but, as good friends, we will recal to the recollection of your Highness that it was not your Highness, but the Admiral of Arragon, that commanded the relieving force before that city.

"'Tis very true that we summon your Highnesses, and levy upon your provinces, in order to obtain means of living; for in what other quarter should we make application. Your Highnesses give us nothing except promises; but soldiers are not chameleons, to live on such air. According to every principle of law, creditors have a lien on the property of their debtors.

"As to condemning to death as traitors and scoundrels those who don't desire to be killed, and who have the means of killing such as attempt to execute the sentence, this is hardly

[14] Meteren (470–472) gives the text.

in accordance with the extraordinary wisdom which has always characterized your Highnesses.

"As to the confiscation of our goods, both moveable and immoveable, we would simply make this observation :—

"Our moveable goods are our swords alone, and they can only be moved by ourselves. They are our immoveable goods as well; for should any one but ourselves undertake to move them, we assure your Highnesses that they will prove too heavy to be handled.

"As to the official register and deposit ordained of the money, clothing, and other property belonging to ourselves, our wives and children, the work may be done without clerks of inventory. Certainly, if the domains of your Highnesses have no other sources of revenue than the proceeds of this confiscation, wherewith to feed the ostrich-like digestions of those about you, 'tis to be feared that ere long they will be in the same condition as were ours, when we were obliged to come together in Hoogstraaten to devise means to keep ourselves, our wives, and children alive. And at that time we were an unbreeched people, like the Indians—saving your Highnesses' reverence—and the climate here is too cold for such costume. Your Highnesses, and your relatives the Emperor and King of Spain, will hardly make your royal heads greasy with the fat of such property as we possess. 'Twill also be a remarkable spectacle after you have stripped our wives and children stark naked for the benefit of your treasury, to see them sent in that condition, within three days afterwards, out of the country, as the ban ordains.

"You order the ban to be executed against our children and our children's children, but your Highness never learned this in the Bible, when you were an archbishop, and when you expounded, or ought to have expounded, the Holy Scriptures to your flock. What theology teaches your Highness to vent your wrath upon the innocent?

"Whenever the cause of discontent is taken away, the soldiers will become obedient and cheerful. All kings and

princes may mirror themselves in the bad government of your Highness, and may see how they fare who try to carry on a war, while with their own hands they cut the sinews of war. The great leaders of old—Cyrus, Alexander, Scipio, Cæsar—were accustomed, not to starve, but to enrich their soldiers. What did Alexander, when in an arid desert they brought him a helmet full of water? He threw it on the sand, saying that there was only enough for him, but not enough for his army.

"Your Highnesses have set ten crowns, and one hundred, and five hundred crowns upon our heads, but never could find five hundred mites nor ten mites to keep our souls and bodies together.

"Yet you have found means to live yourselves with pomp and luxury, far exceeding that of the great Emperor Charles, and much surpassing the magnificence of your Highnesses' brothers, the emperor and the king." [15]

Thus, and much more, the magistrates of the "Italian republic"—answering their master's denunciations of vengeance, both in this world and the next, with a humorous scorn very refreshing in that age of the world to contemplate. The expanding influence of the Dutch commonwealth was already making itself felt even in the ranks of its most determined foes.

The mutineers had also made an agreement with the States-General, by which they had secured permission, in case of need, to retire within the territory of the republic. Maurice had written to them from his camp before Grave, and at first they were disposed to treat him with as little courtesy as they had shown the Nuncius; for they put the prince's letter on a staff, and fired at it as a mark, assuring the trumpeter who brought it that they would serve him in the same manner should he venture thither again.[16] Very soon afterwards, however, the Eletto and council, reproving the folly of their subordinates, opened negotiations with the stadholder, who, with the consent of the States, gave them preli-

[15] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[16] Van der Kemp, ii. 386.

minary permission to take refuge under the guns of Bergen-op-Zoom, should they by chance be hard pressed.[17]

Thus throughout Europe a singular equilibrium of contending forces seemed established. Before Ostend, where the chief struggle between imperialism and republicanism had been proceeding for more than a year with equal vigour, there seemed no possibility of a result. The sands drank up the blood of the combatants on both sides, month after month, in summer; the pestilence in town and camp mowed down Catholic and Protestant with perfect impartiality during the winter, while the remorseless ocean swept over all in its wrath, obliterating in an hour the patient toil of months.

In Spain, in England, and Ireland; in Hungary, Germany, Sweden, and Poland, men wrought industriously day by day and year by year, to destroy each other, and to efface the products of human industry, and yet no progress could fairly be registered. The Turk was in Buda, on the right bank of the Danube, and the Christian in Pest, on the left, while the crescent, but lately supplanted by the cross, again waved in triumph over Stuhlweissenberg, capital city of the Magyars. The great Marshal Biron, foiled in his stupendous treachery,[18]

[17] Meteren, Grotius, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* Van der Kemp. Wagenaar, ix. 120-122.

[18] Henry knew quite as well as did the most Catholic king the share of Spain in this vile intrigue. Villeroy avowed to the States' envoy that the king would be quite justified in resorting to arms to punish the treason of the Spanish governor, who having employed such a servant as Biron to cut his master's throat, and stir up his subjects to mutiny, had more grievously violated the peace than if he had simply seized the best province of his kingdom. Nevertheless, Aerssens felt sure, even as he had done the year before, that the king's rage against Spain and his caresses of the republic were mere grimace. Henry was always horribly anxious lest the States should stop fighting, and, at this moment of emotion in France, he was especially suspicious of any appearance of treating between the archduke and the republic.

It was to be seen, at a little later period, how great or how trifling would be the indignation of the British king at a wholesale attempt at murder devised, as it was suspected, in Spain. It may at least be counted among the signs of human progress that assassination is no longer one of the commonplace means employed by anointed sovereigns against each other, and against individuals obnoxious to royal displeasure.

Certainly it may be doubted whether the practice, if now attempted, would be looked upon with such lenity by the civilized world as in the reigns of the Philips, Elizabeth, James, and Henry. Meantime the shallow artifices by which it was attempted at the French court to veil the share of Spain in Biron's plot were pitiable. Excuses for Spain were made by the French Government in order to conceal its own shame. "They don't consider," said

had laid down his head upon the block; the catastrophe following hard upon the madcap riot of Lord Essex in the Strand and his tragic end. The troublesome and restless favourites of Henry and of Elizabeth had closed their stormy career, but the designs of the great king and the great queen were growing wider and wilder, more false and more fantastic than ever, as the evening shadows of both were lengthening.

But it was not in Europe nor in Christendom alone during that twilight epoch of declining absolutism, regal and sacerdotal, and the coming glimmer of freedom, religious and commercial, that the contrast between the old and new civilizations was exhibiting itself.

The same fishermen and fighting men, whom we have but lately seen sailing forth from Zeeland and Friesland to confront the dangers of either pole, were now contending in the Indian seas with the Portuguese monopolists of the tropics.

A century long, the generosity of the Roman pontiff in bestowing upon others what was not his property had guaranteed to the nation of Vasco de Gama one half at least of the valuable possessions which maritime genius, unflinching valour, and boundless cruelty had won and kept.[19] But the spirit of change was abroad in the world. Potentates and merchants

Aerssens, "that the Spaniard will never change his designs, but will be ever seeking new opportunities. The sole result of the discovery of this conspiracy is that the king loses a good servant, and is obliged to show too clearly that he fears war, and therefore is seeking for peace. The pope pleads innocence, the king believes him, and Villeroy holds fast to his old maxim that the French crown can only prosper by keeping well with the pope.

"What fruit then shall we gather from the evil of this plot or the good of its discovery. The king says that the King of Spain is too good a brother, too devout, too inexperienced to hatch this perfidy. 'Tis all Fuentes and other ministers in combination with the Duke of Savoy. I have always observed that princes never avow mishaps, but are very forward about successes."—Van Deventer, ii. 294, 295, 324, 325.

[19] Borgia, Pope of Rome, had conscientiously divided something that was supposed to be a new world into two halves, for his two best children, the monarchs of Spain and Portugal; Catholic majesty to take that portion lying west of a line drawn from north to south pole about 1000 miles beyond the Cape Verde Islands; Faithful majesty the other slice. Subsequently, when Catholic majesty, towards the end of the 16th century, swallowed Faithful majesty, with all his kingdoms, he legally absorbed the East Indian possessions, and became proprietor of the whole new world, under the Borgian grant.

This was public law, religion, high politics, and common sense in those days, but the unsophisticated Hollanders could not be made to understand the theory.

under the equator had been sedulously taught that there were no other white men on the planet but the Portuguese and their conquerors the Spaniards, and that the Dutch—of whom they had recently heard, and the portrait of whose great military chieftain they had seen after the news of the Nieuport battle had made the circuit of the earth—were a mere mob of pirates and savages inhabiting the obscurest of dens. They were soon, however, to be enabled to judge for themselves as to the power and the merits of the various competitors for their trade.

Early in this year Andreas Hurtado de Mendoza with a stately fleet of galleons and smaller vessels, more than five-and-twenty in all, was on his way towards the island of Java to inflict summary vengeance upon those oriental rulers who had dared to trade with men forbidden by his Catholic Majesty and the Pope.

The city of Bantam was the first spot marked out for destruction, and it so happened that a Dutch skipper, Wolfert Hermann by name, commanding five trading vessels, in which were three hundred men, had just arrived in those seas to continue the illicit commerce which had aroused the ire of the Portuguese.[20] His whole force both of men and of guns was far inferior to that of the flag-ship alone of Mendoza. But he resolved to make manifest to the Indians that the Batavians were not disposed to relinquish their promising commercial relations with them, nor to turn their backs upon their newly found friends in the hour of danger. To the profound astonishment of the Portuguese admiral the Dutchman with his five little trading ships made an attack on the pompous armada, intending to avert chastisement from the king of Bantam. It was not possible for Wolfert to cope at close quarters with his immensely superior adversary, but his skill and nautical experience enabled him to play at what was then considered long bowls with extraordinary effect. The greater lightness and mobility of his vessels made them more than a match, in this kind of encounter, for the clumsy, top-heavy, and sluggish marine castles in which Spain and

[20] Grotius, ix. 688, *seqq.*

Portugal then went forth to battle on the ocean. It seems almost like the irony of history, and yet it is the literal fact, that the Duch galleot of that day—hardly changed in two and a half centuries since—"the bull-browed galleot butting through the stream,"[21]—was then the model clipper, conspicuous among all ships for its rapid sailing qualities and ease of handling. So much has the world moved, on sea and shore, since those simple but heroic days. And thus Wolfert's swift-going galleots circled round and round the awkward, ponderous, and much-puzzled Portuguese fleet, until by well-directed shots and skilful manœuvring they had sunk several ships, taken two, run others into the shallows, and, at last, put the whole to confusion. After several days of such fighting, Admiral Mendoza fairly turned his back upon his insignificant opponent, and abandoned his projects upon Java.[22] Bearing away for the Island of Amboyna with the remainder of his fleet, he laid waste several of its villages and odoriferous spice-fields, while Wolfert and his companions entered Bantam in triumph, and were hailed as deliverers.[23] And thus on the extreme western verge of this magnificent island was founded the first trading settlement of the Batavian republic in the archipelago of the equator—the foundation-stone of a great commercial empire which was to encircle the earth. Not many years later, at the distance of a dozen leagues from Bantam, a congenial swamp was fortunately discovered in a land whose volcanic peaks rose two miles into the air, and here a town duly laid out with canals and bridges, and trim gardens and stagnant pools, was baptized by the ancient and well-beloved name of Good-Meadow or Batavia, which it bears to this day.

Meantime Wolfert Hermann was not the only Hollander cruising in those seas able to convince the Oriental mind that all Europeans save the Portuguese were not pirates and savages, and that friendly intercourse with other foreigners might be as profitable as slavery to the Spanish crown.

[21] Oliver Wendell Holmes.
[22] Grotius. xi. 608, 609. Meteren, 463–465. Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* [23] Ibid.

Captain Nek made treaties of amity and commerce with the potentates of Ternate, Tydor, and other Molucca islands. The King of Candy on the Island of Ceylon, lord of the odoriferous fields of cassia which perfume those tropical seas, was glad to learn how to exchange the spices of the equator for the thousand fabrics and products of western civilization which found their great emporium in Holland.[24] Jacob Heemskerk, too, who had so lately astonished the world by his exploits and discoveries during his famous winter in Nova Zembla, was now seeking adventures and carrying the flag and fame of the republic along the Indian and Chinese coasts. The King of Johor on the Malayan peninsula entered into friendly relations with him, being well pleased, like so many of those petty rulers, to obtain protection against the Portuguese whom he had so long hated and feared. He informed Heemskerk of the arrival in the straits of Malacca of an immense Lisbon carrack, laden with pearls and spices, brocades and precious stones, on its way to Europe, and suggested an attack. It is true that the roving Hollander merely commanded a couple of the smallest galleots with about a hundred and thirty men in the two. But when was Jacob Heemskerk ever known to shrink from an encounter—whether from single-handed combat with a polar bear, or from leading a forlorn hope against a Spanish fort, or from assailing a Portuguese armada. The carrack, more than one thousand tons burthen, carried seventeen guns, and at least eight times as many men as he commanded.[25] Nevertheless, after a combat of but brief duration Heemskerk was master of the carrack. He spared the lives of his seven hundred prisoners, and set them on shore before they should have time to discover to what a handful of Dutchmen they had surrendered. Then dividing about a million florins' worth of booty among his men, who doubtless found such cruising among the spice-islands more attractive than wintering at the North Pole, he sailed in the carrack for Macao, where he found no difficulty in convincing the authorities of the celes-

[24] Grotius, xi. 608—613. [25] Ibid.

tial empire that the friendship of the Dutch republic was worth cultivating.[26] There was soon to be work in other regions for the hardy Hollander—such as was to make the name of Heemskerk a word to conjure with down to the latest posterity. Meantime he returned to his own country to take part in the great industrial movements which were to make this year an epoch in commercial history.

The conquerors of Mendoza and deliverers of Bantam had however not paused in their work. From Java they sailed to Banda, and on those volcanic islands of nutmegs and cloves made, in the name of their commonwealth, a treaty with its republican antipodes. For there was no king to be found in that particular archipelago, and the two republics, the Oriental and the Germanic, dealt with each other with direct and becoming simplicity.[27] Their convention was in accordance with the commercial ideas of the day, which assumed monopoly as the true basis of national prosperity. It was agreed that none but Dutchmen should ever purchase the nutmegs of Banda, and that neither nation should harbour refugees from the other. Other articles, however, showed how much farther the practice of political and religious liberty had advanced than had any theory of commercial freedom. It was settled that each nation should judge its own citizens according to its own laws, that neither should interfere by force with the other in regard to religious matters, but that God should be judge over them all.[28] Here at least was progress beyond the system according to which the Holy Inquisition furnished the only enginry of civilization. The guardianship assumed by Holland over these children of the sun was at least an improvement on the tyranny which roasted them alive if they rejected religious dogmas which they could not comprehend, and which proclaimed with fire, sword, and gibbet that the Omnipotent especially forbade the nutmeg trade to all but the subjects of the most Catholic king.

[26] Grotius, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[27] Grotius, xi. 609.

[28] Ibid. "Religionis ob causam molesti alii aliis ne essent sed Deo judici rem permitterent."

In Atsgen or Achim, chief city of Sumatra, a treaty was likewise made with the government of the place, and it was arranged that the king of Atsgen should send over an embassy to the distant but friendly republic. Thus he might judge whether the Hollanders were enemies of all the world, as had been represented to him, or only of Spain; whether their knowledge of the arts and sciences, and their position among the western nations entitled them to respect, and made their friendship desirable; or whether they were only worthy of the contempt which their royal and aristocratic enemies delighted to heap upon their heads.[29] The envoys sailed from Sumatra on board the same little fleet which, under the command of Wolfert Hermann, had already done such signal service, and on their way to Europe they had an opportunity of seeing how these republican sailors could deal with their enemies on the ocean.

Off St. Helena an immense Portuguese carrack richly laden and powerfully armed, was met, attacked, and overpowered by the little merchantmen with their usual audacity and skill. A magnificent booty was equitably divided among the captors, the vanquished crew were set safely on shore, and the Hollanders then pursued their home voyage without further adventures.[30]

The ambassadors, with an Arab interpreter, were duly presented to Prince Maurice in the lines before the city of Grave.[31] Certainly no more favourable opportunity could have been offered them for contrasting the reality of military power, science, national vigour, and wealth, which made the republic eminent among the nations, with the fiction of a horde of insignificant and bloodthirsty savages which her enemies had made so familiar at the antipodes. Not only were the intrenchments, bastions, galleries, batteries, the discipline and equipment of the troops, a miracle in the eyes of these newly arrived Oriental ambassadors, but they had awakened the astonishment of Europe, already accustomed to such spectacles. Evidently the amity of the stadholder

[29] Meteren, Grotius, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* [30] Ibid. [31] Ibid.

and his commonwealth was a jewel of price, and the King of Achim would have been far more barbarous than he had ever deemed the Dutchmen to be, had he not well heeded the lesson which he had sent so far to learn.

The chief of the legation, Abdulzamar, died in Zeeland, and was buried with honourable obsequies at Middleburg, a monument being raised to his memory. The other envoys returned to Sumatra, fully determined to maintain close relations with the republic.[32]

There had been other visitors in Maurice's lines before Grave at about the same period. Among others, Gaston Spinola, recently created by the archduke Count of Bruay, had obtained permission to make a visit to a wounded relative, then a captive in the republican camp, and was hospitably entertained at the stadholder's table. Maurice, with soldierly bluntness, ridiculed the floating batteries, the castles on wheels, the sausages, and other newly-invented machines, employed before Ostend, and characterized them as rather fit to catch birds with than to capture a city, defended by mighty armies and fleets.

"If the archduke has set his heart upon it, he had far better try to buy Ostend," he observed.

"What is your price?" asked the Italian; "will you take 200,000 ducats?"

"Certainly not less than a million and a half," was the reply; so highly did Maurice rate the position and advantages of the city. He would venture to prophesy, he added, that the siege of Ostend would last as long as the siege of Troy.

"Ostend is no Troy," said Spinola with a courtly flourish, "although there are certainly not wanting an Austrian Agamemnon, a Dutch Hector, and an Italian Achilles."[33] The last allusion was to the speaker's namesake and kinsman, the Marquis Ambrose Spinola, of whom much was to be heard in the world from that time forth.

Meantime, although so little progress had been made at

[32] Meteren, Grotius, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* [33] Gallucci, ii. 109.

Ostend, Maurice had thoroughly done his work before Grave. On the 18th September the place surrendered, after sixty days' siege, upon the terms usually granted by the stadholder. The garrison was to go out with the honours of war. Those of the inhabitants who wished to leave were to leave; those who preferred staying were to stay; rendering due allegiance to the republic, and abstaining in public from the rites of the Roman Church, without being exposed, however, to any inquiries as to their religious opinions, or any interference within their households.[34]

The work went slowly on before Ostend. Much effect had been produced, however, by the operations of the archduke's little naval force. The galley of that day, although a child's toy as compared with the wonders of naval architecture of our own time, was an effective machine enough to harass fishing and coasting vessels in creeks and estuaries, and along the shores of Holland and Zeeland during tranquil weather.

The locomotive force of these vessels consisted of galley-slaves, in which respect the Spaniards had an advantage over other nations; for they had no scruples in putting prisoners of war into chains and upon the benches of the rowers. Humanity—"the law of Christian piety," in the words of the noble Grotius—forbade the Hollanders from reducing their captives to such horrible slavery,[35] and they were obliged to content themselves with condemned criminals, and with the few other wretches whom abject poverty and the impossibility of earning other wages could induce to accept the service. And as in the maritime warfare of our own day, the machinery—engines, wheels, and boilers—is the especial aim of the enemy's artillery, so the chain-gang who rowed in the waist of the galley, the living enginry, without which the vessel became a useless tub, was as surely marked out for destruction whenever a sea-fight took place.

The Hollanders did not very much favour this species of war-craft, both by reason of the difficulty of procuring the

[34] Meteren, 470. Grotius, xi. 604. Van der Kemp, ii. 99 and notes. Wagenaar, ix. 120.

[35] Hist. ix. 575.

gang, and because to a true lover of the ocean and of naval warfare the galley was about as clumsy and amphibious a production as could be hoped of human perverseness. High where it should be low. Exposed, flat, and fragile, where elevation and strength were indispensable—encumbered and top-heavy where it should be level and compact, weak in the waist, broad at stem and stern, awkward in manœuvre, helpless in rough weather, sluggish under sail, although possessing the single advantage of being able to crawl over a smooth sea when better and faster ships were made stationary by absolute calm, the galley was no match for the Dutch galleot, either at close quarters or in a breeze.

Nevertheless for a long time there had been a certain awe produced by the possibility of some prodigious but unknown qualities in these outlandish vessels, and already the Hollanders had tried their hand at constructing them. On a late occasion a galley of considerable size, built at Dort, had rowed past the Spanish forts on the Scheld, gone up to Antwerp, and coolly cut out from the very wharves of the city a Spanish galley of the first class, besides seven war-vessels of lesser dimensions, at first gaining advantage by surprise, and then breaking down all opposition in a brilliant little fight. The noise of the encounter summoned the citizens and garrison to the walls, only to witness the triumph achieved by Dutch audacity, and to see the victors dropping rapidly down the river, laden with booty and followed by their prizes. Nor was the mortification of these unwilling spectators diminished when the clear notes of a bugle on board the Dutch galley brought to their ears the well-known melody of "Wilhelmus of Nassau," once so dear to every patriotic heart in Antwerp, and perhaps causing many a renegade cheek on this occasion to tingle with shame.[36]

Frederic Spinola, a volunteer belonging to the great and wealthy Genoese family of that name, had been performing a good deal of privateer work with a small force of galleys which he kept under his command at Sluys. He had suc-

[36] Hist. 576.

ceeded in inflicting so much damage upon the smaller merchantmen of the republic, and in maintaining so perpetual a panic in calm weather among the seafaring multitudes of those regions, that he was disposed to extend the scale of his operations. On a visit to Spain he had obtained permission from Government to employ in this service eight great galleys, recently built on the Guadalquivir for the Royal Navy. He was to man and equip them at his own expense, and was to be allowed the whole of the booty that might result from his enterprise. Early in the autumn he set forth with his eight galleys on the voyage to Flanders, but, off Cezimbra, on the Portuguese coast, unfortunately fell in with Sir Robert Mansell, who, with a compact little squadron of English frigates, was lying in wait for the homeward-bound India fleet on their entrance to Lisbon. An engagement took place, in which Spinola lost two of his galleys. His disaster might have been still greater, had not an immense Indian carrack, laden with the richest merchandize, just then hove in sight, to attract his conquerors with a hope of better prize-money than could be expected from the most complete victory over him and his fleet.[37]

With the remainder of his vessels Spinola crept out of sight while the English were ransacking the carrack. On the 3rd of October he had entered the channel with a force which, according to the ideas of that day, was still formidable. Each of his galleys was of two hundred and fifty slave power, and carried, beside the chain-gang, four hundred fighting men. His flag-ship was called the St. Lewis; the names of the other vessels being the St. Philip, the Morning Star, the St. John, the Hyacinth, and the Padilla. The Trinity and the Opportunity had been destroyed off Cezimbra. Now there happened to be cruising just then in the channel, Captain Peter Mol, master of the Dutch war-ship Tiger, and Captain Lubbertson, commanding the Pelican. These two espied the Spanish squadron, paddling at about dusk towards the English coast, and quickly

3 October, 1602.

[37] Grotius, xi. 607, 608.

gave notice to Vice-Admiral John Kant, who in the States' ship Half-moon, with three other war-galleots, was keeping watch in that neighbourhood. It was dead calm as the night fell, and the galleys of Spinola, which had crept close up to the Dover cliffs, were endeavouring to row their way across in the darkness towards the Flemish coast, in the hope of putting unobserved into the Gut of Sluys.[38] All went well with Spinola till the moon rose; but, with the moon, sprang up a steady breeze, so that the galleys lost all their advantage. Nearly off Gravelines another States' ship, the Mackerel, came in sight, which forthwith attacked the St. Philip, pouring a broadside into her by which fifty men were killed. Drawing off from this assailant, the galley found herself close to the Dutch admiral in the Half-moon, who, with all sail set, bore straight down upon her, struck her amidships with a mighty crash, carrying off her mainmast and her poop, and then, extricating himself with difficulty from the wreck, sent a tremendous volley of cannon-shot and lesser missiles straight into the waist where sat the chain-gang. A howl of pain and terror rang through the air, while oars and benches, arms, legs, and mutilated bodies, chained inexorably together, floated on the moonlit waves. An instant later, and another galleot bore down to complete the work, striking with her iron prow the doomed St. Philip so straightly and surely that she went down like a stone, carrying with her galley-slaves, sailors, and soldiers, besides all the treasure brought by Spinola for the use of his fleet.

The Morning Star was the next galley attacked, Captain Sael, in a stout galleot, driving at her under full sail, with the same accuracy and solidity of shock as had been displayed in the encounter with the St. Philip and with the same result. The miserable, top-heavy monster galley was struck between mainmast and stern, with a blow which carried away the assailant's own bowsprit and fore-bulwarks, but which completely demolished the stern of the galley, and crushed out of

[38] Fleming, 290-294. Bentivoglio, iii. 516. Grotius, *ubi sup.* Haestens, 232 *seqq.* Meteren, 474.

existence the greater portion of the live machinery sitting chained and rowing on the benches. And again, as the first enemy hauled off from its victim, Admiral Kant came up once more in the Half-moon, steered straight at the floundering galley, and sent her with one crash to the bottom. It was not very scientific practice perhaps. It was but simple butting, plain sailing, good steering, and the firing of cannon at short pistol-shot. But after all, the work of those unsophisticated Dutch skippers was done very thoroughly, without flinching, and, as usual, at great odds of men and guns. Two more of the Spanish galleys were chased into the shallows near Gravelines, where they went to pieces. Another was wrecked near Calais. The galley which bore Frederic Spinola himself and his fortunes succeeded in reaching Dunkirk, whence he made his way discomfited, to tell the tale of his disaster to the archduke at Brussels. During the fight the Dutch admiral's boats had been active in picking up such of the drowning crews, whether galley-slaves or soldiers, as it was possible to save. But not more than two hundred were thus rescued, while by far the greater proportion of those on board, probably three thousand in number, perished, and the whole fleet, by which so much injury was to have been inflicted on Dutch commerce, was, save one damaged galley, destroyed.[39] Yet scarcely any lives were lost by the Hollanders, and it is certain that the whole force in their fleet did not equal the crew of a single one of the enemy's ships. Neither Spinola nor the archduke seemed likely to make much out of the contract. Meantime, the Genoese volunteer kept quiet in Sluys, brooding over schemes to repair his losses and to renew his forays on the indomitable Zeelanders.

Another winter had now closed in upon Ostend, while still the siege had scarcely advanced an inch. During the ten months of Governor Dorp's administration, four thousand men had died of wounds or malady within the town, and certainly twice as many in the trenches of the besieging force. Still

[39] Authorities last cited.

the patient Bucquoy went on, day after day, night after night, month after month, planting his faggots and fascines, creeping forward almost imperceptibly with his dyke, paying five florins each to the soldiers who volunteered to bring the materials, and a double ducat to each man employed in laying them. So close were they under the fire of the town, that a life was almost laid down for every ducat, but the Gullet, which it was hoped to close, yawned as wide as ever, and the problem how to reduce a city, open by sea to the whole world, remained without solution. On the last day of the year a splendid fleet of transports arrived in the town, laden with whole droves of beeves and flocks of sheep, besides wine and bread and beer enough to supply a considerable city; so that market provisions in the beleaguered town were cheaper than in any part of Europe.[40] Thus skilfully did the States-General and Prince Maurice watch from the outside over Ostend, while the audacious but phlegmatic sea-captains brought their cargoes unscathed through the Gullet, although Bucquoy's batteries had now advanced to within seventy yards of the shore. 31 Dec. 1602.

On the west side, the besiegers were slowly eating their way through the old harbour towards the heart of the place. Subterranean galleries, patiently drained of their water, were met by counter-galleries leading out from the town, and many were the desperate hand-to-hand encounters, by dim lanterns, or in total darkness, beneath the ocean and beneath the earth; Hollander, Spaniard, German, Englishman, Walloon, digging and dying in the fatal trenches, as if there had been no graves at home. Those insatiable sand-banks seemed ready to absorb all the gold and all the life of Christendom. But the monotony of that misery it is useless to chronicle. Hardly an event of these dreary days has been left unrecorded by faithful diarists and industrious soldiers, but time has swept us far away from them, and the world has rolled on to fresher fields of carnage and ruin. All winter long those unwearied, intelligent, fierce, and cruel creatures

[40] Fleming, 321.

toiled and fought in the stagnant waters, and patiently burrowed in the earth. It seemed that if Ostend were ever lost it would be because at last entirely bitten away and consumed. When there was no Ostend left, it might be that the archduke would triumph.

As there was always danger that the movements on the east side might be at last successful, it was the command of Maurice that the labours to construct still another harbour should go on in case the Gullet should become useless, as the old haven had been since the beginning of the siege. And the working upon that newest harbour was as dangerous to the Hollanders as Bucquoy's dike-building to the Spaniards, for the pioneers and sappers were perpetually under fire from the batteries which the count had at last successfully established on the extremity of his work. It was a piteous sight to see those patient delvers lay down their spades and die, hour after hour, to be succeeded by their brethren only to share their fate. Yet still the harbour building progressed; for the republic was determined that the city should be open to the sea so long as the States had a stiver, or a ship, or a spade.

While this deadly industry went on, the more strictly military operations were not pretermitted day nor night. The Catholics were unwearied in watching for a chance of attack, and the Hollanders stood on the ramparts and in the trenches, straining eyes and ears through the perpetual icy mists of that black winter to catch the sight and sound of a coming foe. Especially the by-watches, as they were called, were enough to break down constitutions of iron; for, all day and night, men were stationed in the inundated regions, bound on pain of death to stand in the water and watch for a possible movement of the enemy, until the waves should rise so high as to make it necessary to swim. Then, until the tide fell again, there was brief repose.[41]

And so the dreary winter faded away at last into chill and blustering spring. On the 13th of April, 1603, a hurricane,

[41] Fleming, 350.

such as had not occurred since the siege began, raged across the ocean, deluging and shattering the devoted town.[42] The waters rose over dyke and parapet, and the wind swept from the streets and ramparts every living thing. Not a soldier or sailor could keep his feet, the chief tower of the church was blown into the square, chimneys and windows crashed on all sides, and the elements had their holiday, as if to prove how helpless a thing was man, however fierce and determined, when the powers of Nature arose in their strength. It was as if no siege existed, as if no hostile armies had been lying nearly two years long close to each other, and losing no opportunity to fly at each other's throats. The strife of wind and ocean gave a respite to human rage. It was but a brief respite. At nightfall there was a lull in the tempest, and the garrison crept again to the ramparts. Instantly the departing roar of the winds and waters were succeeded by fainter but still more threatening sounds, and the sentinels on duty had scarce time to give the alarm, and the drums and trumpets to rally the garrison, when the attack came. The sleepless Spaniards were already upon them. In the Porcupine fort, a blaze of wickerwork and building materials suddenly illuminated the gathering gloom of night, and the loud cries of the assailants, who had succeeded in kindling this fire by their missiles, proclaimed the fierceness of the attack. Governor Dorp was himself in the fort, straining every nerve to extinguish the flames, and to hold this most important position. He was successful. After a brief but bloody encounter the Spaniards were repulsed with heavy loss. All was quiet again, and the garrison in the Porcupine were congratulating themselves on their victory when suddenly the ubiquitous Philip Fleming plunged, with a face of horror, into the governor's quarters, informing him that the attack on the redoubt had been a feint, and that the Spaniards were at that very moment swarming all over the three external forts, called the South Square, the West Square, and the Polder.[43] These points, which have been already

13 April, 1603.

[42] Fleming, 351.

[43] Ibid. 351-354.

described, were most essential to the protection of the place, as without them the whole counterscarp was in danger. It was to save those exposed but vital positions that Sir Francis Vere had resorted to the slippery device of the last Christmas Eve but one.

Dorp refused to believe the intelligence. The squares were well guarded, the garrison ever alert. Spaniards were not birds of prey to fly up those perpendicular heights, and for beings without wings the thing was impossible. He followed Fleming through the darkness, and was soon convinced that the impossible was true. The precious squares were in the hands of the enemy. Nimble as monkeys, those yellow-jerkined Italians, Walloons, and Spaniards—storm-hats on their heads and swords in their teeth—had planted rope-ladders, swung themselves up the walls by hundreds upon hundreds, while the fight had been going on at the Porcupine, and were now rushing through the forts grinning defiance, yelling and chattering with fierce triumph, and beating down all opposition. It was splendidly done. The discomfited Dorp met small bodies of his men, panic-struck, reeling out from their stronghold, wounded, bleeding, shrieking for help and for orders. It seemed as if the Spaniards had dropped from the clouds. The Dutch commandant did his best to rally the fugitives, and to encourage those who had remained. All night long the furious battle raged, every inch of ground being contested; for both Catholics and Hollanders knew full well that this triumph was worth more than all that had been gained for the archduke in eighteen months of siege. Pike to pike, breast to breast, they fought through the dark April night; the last sobs of the hurricane dying unheard, the red lanterns flitting to and fro, the fireworks hissing in every direction of earth and air, the great wicker piles, heaped up with pitch and rosin, flaming over a scene more like a dance of goblins than a commonplace Christian massacre. At least fifteen hundred were killed—besiegers and besieged—during the storming of the forts and the determined but unsuccessful attempt of the

Hollanders to retake them. And when at last the day had dawned, and the Spaniards could see the full extent of their victory, they set themselves with unusual alacrity to killing such of the wounded and prisoners as were in their hands, while, at the same time, they turned the guns of their newly acquired works upon the main counterscarp of the town.[44]

Yet the besieged—discomfited but undismayed—lost not a moment in strengthening their inner works, and in doing their best, day after day, by sortie, cannonade, and every possible device, to prevent the foe from obtaining full advantage of his success. The triumph was merely a local one, and the patient Hollanders soon proved to the enemy that the town was not gained by carrying the three squares, but that every inch of the place was to be contested as hotly as those little redoubts had been. Ostend, after standing nearly two years of siege, was not to be carried by storm. A goodly slice of it had been pared off that April night, and was now in possession of the archduke, but this was all.[45] Meantime the underground work was resumed on both sides.

Frederic Spinola, notwithstanding the stunning defeat sustained by him in the preceding October, had not lost heart while losing all his ships. On the contrary, he had been busy during the winter in building other galleys. Accordingly, one fine morning in May, Counsellor Flooswyk, being on board a war vessel convoying some empty transports from Ostend, observed signs of mischief brewing as he sailed past the Gut of Sluys, and forthwith gave notice of what he had seen to Admiral Joost de Moor, commanding the blockading squadron. The counsellor was right. Frederic Spinola meant mischief. It was just before sunrise of a beautiful summer's day. The waves were smooth—not a breath of wind stirring—and De Moor, who had four little war-ships of Holland, and was supported besides by a famous vessel called the Black Galley of Zeeland, under Captain Jacob Michelzoon, soon observed a movement from Sluys.[46]

25 May, 1603.

[44] Fleming, 351–354. [45] Ibid.

[46] The best authorities for this encounter are Groen van Prinsterer, Archives, II. 194; Fleming, 382–384;

Over the flat and glassy surface of the sea, eight galleys of the largest size were seen crawling slowly, like vast reptiles, towards his position. Four lesser vessels followed in the wake of the great galleys. The sails of the admiral's little fleet flapped idly against the mast. He could only placidly await the onset. The Black Galley, however, moved forward according to her kind, and was soon vigorously attacked by two galleys of the enemy. With all the force that five hundred rowers could impart, these two huge vessels ran straight into the Zeeland ship, and buried their iron prows in her sides. Yet the Black Galley was made of harder stuff than were those which had gone down in the channel the previous autumn under the blows of John Kant. Those on board her, at least, were made of tougher material than were galley-slaves and land-soldiers. The ramming was certainly not like that of a thousand horse-power of steam, and there was no very great display of science in the encounter; yet Captain Jacob Michelzoon, with two enemy's ships thus stuck to his sides, might well have given himself up for lost. The disproportion of ships and men was monstrous. Beside the chain-gang, each of Spinola's ships was manned by two hundred soldiers,[47] while thirty-six musketeers[48] from the Flushing garrison were the only men-at-arms in De Moor's whole squadron. But those amphibious Zeelanders and Hollanders, perfectly at home in the water, expert in handling vessels, and excellent cannoneers, were more than a match for twenty times their number of landsmen. It was a very simple-minded, unsophisticated contest. The attempt to board the Black Galley was met with determined resistance, but the Zeeland sailors clambered like cats upon the bowsprits of the Spanish galleys, fighting with cutlass and handspike, while a broadside or two was delivered with terrible effect into the benches of the chained and wretched slaves. Captain Michelzoon was killed,[49] but his successor, Lieutenant Hart,

Meteren, 485, 486; Gallucci, xv. 96–98; Grotius, xii. 625, 626; Bentivoglio, iii. 519.

[47] Fleming, 383.
[48] Grotius, 626.
[49] Gallucci, 97. Fleming, 383.

although severely wounded, swore that he would blow up his ship with his own hands rather than surrender. The decks of all the vessels ran with blood, but at last the Black Galley succeeded in beating off her assailants; the Zeelanders, by main force, breaking off the enemy's bowsprits, so that the two ships of Spinola were glad to sheer off, leaving their stings buried in the enemy's body.[50]

Next, four galleys attacked the stout little galleot of Captain Logier, and with a very similar result. Their prows stuck fast in the bulwarks of the ship, but the boarders soon found themselves the boarded, and, after a brief contest, again the iron bowsprits snapped like pipe-stems, and again the floundering and inexperienced Spaniards shrank away from the terrible encounter which they had provoked. Soon afterwards, Joost de Moor was assailed by three galleys. He received them, however, with cannonade and musketry so warmly that they willingly obeyed a summons from Spinola, and united with the flag-ship in one more tremendous onset upon the Black Galley of Zeeland. And it might have gone hard with that devoted ship, already crippled in the previous encounter, had not Captain Logier fortunately drifted with the current near enough to give her assistance, while the other sailing ships lay becalmed and idle spectators. At last Spinola, conspicuous by his armour, and by magnificent recklessness of danger, fell upon the deck of his galley, torn to pieces with twenty-four wounds from a stone gun of the Black Galley, while at nearly the same moment a gentle breeze began in the distance to ruffle the surface of the waters. More than a thousand men had fallen in Spinola's fleet, inclusive of the miserable slaves, who were tossed overboard as often as wounds made them a cumbrous part of the machinery, and the galleys, damaged, discomfited, laden with corpses and dripping with blood, rowed off into Sluys as speedily as they could move, without waiting until the coming wind should bring all the sailing ships into the fight, together with such other vessels under Haultain as might be cruising in the

[50] Authorities cited.

distance. They succeeded in getting into the Gut of Sluys, and so up to their harbour of refuge.[51] Meantime, baldheaded, weather-beaten Joost de Moor—farther pursuit being impossible—piped all hands on deck, where officers and men fell on their knees, shouting in pious triumph the 34th Psalm:[52] "I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. . . . . O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." So rang forth the notes of humble thanksgiving across the placid sea. And assuredly those hardy mariners, having gained a victory with their little vessels over twelve ships and three thousand men —a numerical force of at least ten times their number,—such as few but Dutchmen could have achieved, had a right to give thanks to Him from whom all blessings flow.

Thus ended the career of Frederic Spinola, a wealthy, gallant, high-born, brilliant youth, who might have earned distinction, and rendered infinitely better service to the cause of Spain and the archdukes, had he not persuaded himself that he had a talent for seamanship. Certainly, never was a more misplaced ambition, a more unlucky career. Not even in that age of rash adventure, when grandees became admirals and field-marshals because they were grandees, had such incapacity been shown by any restless patrician. Frederic Spinola, at the age of thirty-two, a landsman and a volunteer, thinking to measure himself on blue water with such veterans as John Kant, Joost de Moor, and the other Dutchmen and Zeelanders whom it was his fortune to meet, could hardly escape the doom which so rapidly befel him.

On board the Black Galley Captain Michelzoon, eleven of his officers, and fifteen of his men were killed; Admiral de Moor was slightly wounded, and had five of his men killed and twenty wounded; Captain Logier was wounded in the foot, and lost fifteen killed and twelve wounded.[53]

The number of those killed in Spinola's fleet has been placed as high as fourteen hundred, including two hundred

[51] Fleming, Meteren, Gallucci, Bentivoglio, Grotius, *ubi sup.*
[52] Meteren, 486. [53] Ibid.

officers and gentlemen of quality, besides the crowds of galley-slaves thrown overboard.[54] This was perhaps an exaggeration. The losses were, however, sufficient to put a complete stop to the enterprise out of which the unfortunate Spinola had conceived such extravagant hopes of fame and fortune.

The herring-smacks and other coasters, besides the transports passing to and from Ostend, sailed thenceforth unmolested by any galleys from Sluys. One unfortunate sloop, however, in moving out from the beleaguered city, ran upon some shoals before getting out of the Gullet and thus fell a prize to the besiegers. She was laden with nothing more precious than twelve wounded soldiers on their way to the hospitals at Flushing. These prisoners were immediately hanged, at the express command of the archduke,[55] because they had been taken on the sea where, according to his Highness, there were no laws of war.[56]

The stadholder, against his will—for Maurice was never cruel—felt himself obliged to teach the cardinal better jurisprudence and better humanity for the future. In order to show him that there was but one belligerent law on sea and on land, he ordered two hundred Spanish prisoners within his lines to draw lots from an urn in which twelve of the tickets were inscribed with the fatal word gibbet. Eleven of the twelve thus marked by ill luck were at once executed. The twelfth, a comely youth, was pardoned at the intercession of a young girl.[57] It is not stated whether or not she became his wife. It is also a fact worth mentioning, as illustrating the recklessness engendered by a soldier's life, that the man who drew the first blank sold it to one of his comrades and plunged his hand again into the fatal urn.[58] Whether he succeeded in drawing the gibbet at his second trial has not been recorded. When these executions had taken place in full view of the enemy's camp, Maurice formally announced

[54] Letter of Ernest Casimir in Groen v. Prin., Arch. II. 194. Grotius says 300 killed and many wounded. Fleming, p. 384, says 1000 killed besides the wounded and slaves uncounted.

[55] Grotius, xii. 630.

[56] Ibid. "Sed aqua captos ubi nulla forent belli foedera."

[57] Ibid. Meteren, 487. Van der Kemp, 107.

[58] Grotius, *ubi sup.*

that for every prisoner thenceforth put to death by the archduke two captives from his own army should be hanged.[59] These stern reprisals, as usual, put an end to the foul system of martial murder.

Throughout the year the war continued to be exclusively the siege of Ostend. Yet the fierce operations, recently recorded, having been succeeded by a period of comparative languor, Governor Dorp at last obtained permission to depart to repair his broken health. He was succeeded in command of the forces within the town by Charles Van der Noot, colonel of the Zeeland regiment which had suffered so much in the first act of the battle of Nieuport. Previously to this exchange, however, a day of solemn thanksgiving and prayer was set apart on the anniversary of the beginning of the siege.[60] Since the 5th of July, 1601, two years had been spent by the whole power of the enemy in the attempt to reduce this miserable village, and the whole result thus far had been the capture of three little external forts. There seemed cause for thanksgiving.

Philip Fleming, too, obtained a four weeks' holiday—the first in eleven years—and went with his family outside the pestiferous and beleaguered town. He was soon to return to his multifarious duties as auditor, secretary, and chronicler of the city, and unattached aide-de-camp to the commander-in-chief, whoever that might be, and to perform his duty with the same patient courage and sagacity that had marked him from the beginning. "An unlucky cannon-ball of the enemy," as he observes, did some damage at this period to his diary, but it happened at a moment when comparatively little was doing, so that the chasm was of less consequence.[61]

"And so I, Philip Fleming, auditor to the Council of War," he says with homely pathos, "have been so continually employed as not to have obtained leave in all these years to refresh, for a few days outside this town, my troubled spirit after such perpetual work, intolerable cares, and slavery, having had no other pleasure allotted me than with daily

[59] Grotius, Meteren, *ubi sup.* [60] Fleming, 397. [61] Ibid. 399, *seqq.*

sadness, weeping eyes, and heavy yearnings to tread the ramparts, and, like a poor slave laden with fetters, to look at so many others sailing out of the harbour in order to feast their souls in other provinces with green fields and the goodly works of God. And thus it has been until it has nearly gone out of my memory how the fruits of the earth, growing trees, and dumb beasts appear to mortal eye."

He then, with whimsical indignation, alludes to a certain author who pleaded in excuse for the shortcomings of the history of the siege the damage done to his manuscripts by a cannon-ball. "Where the liar dreamt of or invented his cannon-ball," he says, "I cannot tell, inasmuch as he never saw the city of Ostend in his life ; but the said cannon-ball, to my great sorrrow, did come one afternoon through my office, shot from the enemy's great battery, which very much damaged not his memoirs but mine ; taking off the legs and arms at the same time of three poor invalid soldiers seated in the sun before my door and killing them on the spot, and just missing my wife, then great with child, who stood by me with faithfulness through all the sufferings of the bloody siege and presented me twice during its continuance, by the help of Almighty God, with young Amazons or daughters of war." [62]

And so honest Philip Fleming went out for a little time to look at the green trees and the dumb creatures feeding in the Dutch pastures. Meantime the two armies—outside and within Ostend—went moiling on in their monotonous work ; steadily returning at intervals, as if by instinct, to repair the ruin which a superior power would often inflict in a half-hour on the results of laborious weeks.

In the open field the military operations were very trifling, the wager of battle being by common consent fought out on the sands of Ostend, and the necessities for attack and defence absorbing the resources of each combatant. France, England, and Spain were holding a perpetual diplomatic tournament to which our eyes must presently turn, and the Sublime

[62] Fleming, 399, *seqq.*

Realm of the Ottoman and the holy Roman Empire were in the customary equilibrium of their eternal strife.

The mutiny of the veterans continued; the "Italian republic" giving the archduke almost as much trouble, despite his ban and edicts and outlawry, as the Dutch commonwealth itself. For more than a twelvemonth the best troops of the Spanish army had been thus established as a separate empire, levying black-mail on the obedient provinces, hanging such of their old officers as dared to remonstrate, and obeying their elected chief magistrates with exemplary docility.

They had become a force of five thousand strong, cavalry and infantry together, all steady, experienced veterans—the best and bravest soldiers of Europe. The least of them demanded two thousand florins as owed to him by the King of Spain and the archduke. The burghers of Bois-le-Duc and other neighbouring towns in the obedient provinces kept watch and ward, not knowing how soon the Spaniards might be upon them to reward them for their obedience. Not a peasant with provisions was permitted by the mutineers to enter Bois-le-Duc, while the priests were summoned to pay one year's income of all their property on pain of being burned alive. "Very much amazed are the poor priests at these proceedings," said Ernest Nassau, "and there is a terrible quantity of the vile race within and around the city. I hope one day to have the plucking of some of their feathers myself." [63]

The mutiny governed itself as a strict military democracy, and had caused an official seal to be engraved, representing seven snakes entwined in one, each thrusting forth a dangerous tongue, with the motto—

"tutto in ore
E sua Eccelenza in nostro favore." [64]

"His Excellency" meant Maurice of Nassau, with whom formal articles of compact had been arranged. It had become

[63] Groen van Prinsterer, Archives, II. 203. [64] Meteren, 486.

necessary for the archduke, notwithstanding the steady drain of the siege of Ostend, to detach a considerable army against this republic and to besiege them in their capital of Hoogstraaten. With seven thousand foot and three thousand cavalry Frederic Van den Berg took the field against them in the latter part of July. Maurice, with nine thousand five hundred infantry and three thousand horse, lay near Gertruydenberg. When united with the rebel "squadron," two thousand five hundred strong, he would dispose of a force of fifteen thousand veterans, and he moved at once to relieve the besieged mutineers.[65] His cousin Frederic, however, had no desire to measure himself with the stadholder at such odds, and stole away from him in the dark without beat of drum.[66] Maurice entered Hoogstraaten, was received with rapture by the Spanish and Italian veterans,[67] and excited the astonishment of all by the coolness with which he entered into the cage of these dangerous serpents—as they called themselves — handling them, caressing them, and being fondled by them in return. But the veterans knew a soldier when they saw one, and their hearts warmed to the prince—heretic though he were—more than they had ever done to the unfrocked bishop who, after starving them for years, had doomed them to destruction in this world and the next.

The stadholder was feasted and honoured by the mutineers during his brief visit to Hoogstraaten, and concluded with them a convention, according to which that town was to be restored to him, while they were to take temporary possession of the city of Grave. They were likewise to assist, with all their strength, in his military operations until they should make peace on their own terms with the archduke. For two weeks after such treaty they were not to fight against the States, and meantime, though fighting on the republican side, they were to act as an independent corps and in no wise to be merged in the stadholder's forces.[68] So much and no more had resulted from the archduke's excommunication

[65] Meteren, 486–488. [66] Van der Kemp, ii. 104, and notes
[67] Van der Kemp. Meteren, *ubi sup.* [68] Ibid.

of the best part of his army. He had made a present of those troops to the enemy. He had also been employing a considerable portion of his remaining forces in campaigning against their own comrades. While at Grave, the mutineers, or the "squadron" as they were now called, were to be permitted to practise their own religious rites, without offering, however, any interference with the regular Protestant worship of the place. When they should give up Grave, Hoogstraaten was to be restored to them if still in possession of the States, and they were to enter into no negotiations with the archduke except with full knowledge of the stadholder.

There were no further military operations of moment during the rest of the year.

Much more important, however, than siege, battle, or mutiny, to human civilization, were the steady movements of the Dutch skippers and merchants at this period. The ears of Europe were stunned with the clatter of destruction going on all over Christendom, and seeming the only reasonable occupation of Christians; but the little republic, while fighting so heroically against the concentrated powers of despotism in the West, was most industriously building up a great empire in the East. In the new era just dawning, production was to become almost as honourable and potent a principle as destruction.

The voyages among the spicy regions of the equator—so recently wrested from their Catholic and Faithful Majesties by Dutch citizens who did not believe in Borgia—and the little treaties made with petty princes and commonwealths, who for the first time were learning that there were other white men in the world beside the Portuguese, had already led to considerable results. Before the close of the previous year that great commercial corporation had been founded—an empire within an empire, a republic beneath a republic—a counting-house company which was to organize armies, conquer kingdoms, build forts and cities, make war and peace, disseminate and exchange among the nations of the earth the various products of civilization, more perfectly than

any agency hitherto known, and bring the farthest disjoined branches of the human family into closer connection than had ever existed before. That it was a monopoly, offensive to true commercial principles, illiberal, unjust, tyrannical, ignorant of the very rudiments of mercantile philosophy, is plain enough. For the sages of the world were but as clowns, at that period, in economic science.

Was not the great financier of the age, Maximilian de Bethune, at that very moment exhausting his intellect in devices for the prevention of *all* international commerce even in Europe? "The kingdom of France," he groaned, "is stuffed full of the manufactures of our neighbours, and it is incredible what a curse to us are these wares. The import of all foreign goods has now been forbidden under very great penalties." As a necessary corollary to this madhouse legislation an edict was issued, prohibiting the export of gold and silver from France, on pain, not only of confiscation of those precious metals, but of the whole fortune of such as engaged in or winked at the traffic. The king took a public oath never to exempt the culprits from the punishment thus imposed, and, as the thrifty Sully had obtained from the great king a private grant of all those confiscations, and as he judiciously promised twenty-five per cent. thereof to the informer, no doubt he filled his own purse while impoverishing the exchequer.[69]

The united States, not enjoying the blessings of a paternal government, against which they had been fighting almost half a century, could not be expected to rival the stupendous folly of such political economy, although certainly not emancipated from all the delusions of the age.

[69] Mémoires de Sully, iv. 8–10, ed. Londres, 1748. The great minister adds, with diverting simplicity:—"I found a remedy, shorter and less violent than chastisements and confiscations, to prevent the export of specie; that was to raise the value of it." Accordingly the crown of sixty sous was declared to be worth sixty-five sous, and the crown of gold or pistolet of fifty-eight sous was put at sixty-two sous, and so with the other coins in proportion.—Ibid, p. 184.

Nothing was wanting but to declare that the three-hooped pot should have ten hoops, that seven halfpenny loaves should be sold for a penny, and to make it felony to drink small beer—according to the system of an earlier financial reformer.

Nor are we to forget how very recently, and even dimly, the idea of freedom in commerce has dawned upon nations, the freest of all in polity and religion. Certainly the vices and shortcomings of the commercial system now inaugurated by the republic may be justly charged in great part to the epoch, while her vast share in the expanding and upward movement which civilization, under the auspices of self-government, self-help, political freedom, free thought, and unshackled science, was then to undertake—never more perhaps to be permanently checked—must be justly ascribed to herself.

It was considered accordingly that the existence of so many private companies and copartnerships trading to the East was injurious to the interests of commerce. Merchants arriving at the different Indian ports would often find that their own countrymen had been too quick for them, and that other fleets had got the wind out of their sails, that the eastern markets had been stripped, and that prices had gone up to a ruinous height,[70] while on the other hand, in the Dutch cities, nutmegs and cinnamon, brocades and indigo, were as plentiful as red herrings. It was hardly to be expected at that day to find this very triumph of successful traffic considered otherwise than as a grave misfortune, demanding interference on the part of the only free Government then existing in the world. That already free competition and individual enterprise, had made such progress in enriching the Hollanders and the Javanese respectively with a superfluity of useful or agreeable things, brought from the farthest ends of the earth, seemed to the eyes of that day a condition of things likely to end in a general catastrophe. With a simplicity, amazing only to those who are inclined to be vain of a superior wisdom—not their own but that of their wisest contemporaries—one of the chief reasons for establishing the East India Company was stated to be the necessity of providing against low prices of Oriental productions in Europe.

[70] Wagenaar, ix. 147–150.

But national instinct is often wiser than what is supposed to be high national statesmanship, and there can be no doubt that the true foundation of the East India Company was the simple recognition of an iron necessity. Every merchant in Holland knew full well that the Portuguese and Spaniards could never be driven out of their commercial strongholds under the equator, except by a concentration of the private strength and wealth of the mercantile community. The Government had enough on its hands in disputing, inch by inch, at so prodigious an expenditure of blood and treasure, the meagre territory with which nature had endowed the little commonwealth. Private organization, self-help, union of individual purses and individual brains, were to conquer an empire at the antipodes if it were to be won at all. By so doing, the wealth of the nation and its power to maintain the great conflict with the spirit of the past might be indefinitely increased, and the resources of Spanish despotism proportionally diminished. It was not to be expected of Jacob Heemskerk, Wolfert Hermann, or Joris van Spilberg, indomitable skippers though they were, that each, acting on his own responsibility or on that of his supercargo, would succeed every day in conquering a whole Spanish fleet and dividing a million or two of prize-money among a few dozen sailors. Better things even than this might be done by wholesome and practical concentration on a more extended scale.

So the States-General granted a patent or charter to one great company with what, for the time, was an enormous paid-up capital, in order that the India trade might be made secure and the Spaniards steadily confronted in what they had considered their most impregnable possessions. All former trading companies were invited to merge themselves in the Universal East India Company, which, for twenty-one years, should alone have the right to trade to the east of the Cape of Good Hope and to sail through the Straits of Magellan.[71]

[71] Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* Meteren, 466 and vo. Grotius, xi. 612, 613.

The charter had been signed on 20th March, 1602, and was mainly to the following effect.

The company was to pay twenty-five thousand florins to the States-General for its privilege. The whole capital was to be six million six hundred thousand florins. The chamber of Amsterdam was to have one half of the whole interest, the chamber of Zeeland one fourth; the chambers of the Meuse, namely, Delft, Rotterdam, and the north quarter, that is to say, Hoorn and Enkhuizen, each a sixteenth. All the chambers were to be governed by the directors then serving, who however were to be allowed to die out, down to the number of twenty for Amsterdam, twelve for Zeeland, and seven for each of the other chambers. To fill a vacancy occurring among the directors, the remaining members of the board were to nominate three candidates, from whom the estates of the province should choose one. Each director was obliged to have an interest in the company amounting to at least six thousand florins, except the directors for Hoorn and Enkhuizen, of whom only three thousand should be required. The general assembly of these chambers should consist of seventeen directors, eight for Amsterdam, four for Zeeland, two for the Meuse, and two for the north quarter; the seventeenth being added by turns from the chambers of Zeeland, the Meuse, and the north quarter. This assembly was to be held six years at Amsterdam, and then two years in Zeeland. The ships were always to return to the port from which they had sailed. All the inhabitants of the provinces had the right, within a certain time, to take shares in the company. Any province or city subscribing for forty thousand florins or upwards might appoint an agent to look after its affairs.

March 20, 1602.

The Company might make treaties with the Indian powers, in the name of the States-General of the United Netherlands or of the supreme authorities of the same, might build fortresses, appoint generals, and levy troops, provided such troops took oaths of fidelity to the States, or to the supreme authority, and to the Company. No ships, artillery, or other

munitions of war belonging to the Company were to be used in service of the country without permission of the Company. The admiralty was to have a certain proportion of the prizes conquered from the enemy.

The directors should not be liable in property or person for the debts of the Company. The generals of fleets returning home were to make reports on the state of India to the States.[72]

Notification of the union of all India companies with this great corporation was duly sent to the fleets cruising in those regions, where it arrived in the course of the year 1603.[73]

Meantime the first fleet of the Company, consisting of fourteen vessels under command of Admiral Wybrand van Warwyk, sailed before the end of 1602, and was followed towards the close of 1603 by thirteen other ships, under Stephen van der Hagen.[74]

The equipment of these two fleets cost two million two hundred thousand florins.[75]

[72] Meteren, Grotius, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* [73] Ibid. [74] Ibid. [75] Ibid.

CHAPTER XLI.

Death of Queen Elizabeth — Condition of Spain — Legations to James I. — Union of England and Scotland — Characteristics of the new monarch — The English Court and Government — Piratical practices of the English — Audience of the States' envoy with King James —Queen Elizabeth's scheme for remodelling Europe — Ambassador extraordinary from Henry IV. to James — De Rosny's strictures on the English people — Private interview of De Rosny with the States' envoy — De Rosny's audience of the king — Objects of his mission — Insinuations of the Duke of Northumberland — Invitation of the embassy to Greenwich — Promise of James to protect the Netherlands against Spain — Misgivings of Barneveld — Conference at Arundel House — Its unsatisfactory termination — Contempt of De Rosny for the English counsellors — Political aspect of Europe — De Rosny's disclosure to the king of the secret object of his mission — Agreement of James to the proposals of De Rosny — Ratification of the treaty of alliance — Return of De Rosny and suite to France — Arrival of the Spanish ambassador.

ON the 24th of March, 1603, Queen Elizabeth died at Richmond, having nearly completed her seventieth year.[1] The two halves of the little island of Britain were at last politically adjoined to each other by the personal union of the two crowns.

A foreigner, son of the woman executed by Elizabeth, succeeded to Elizabeth's throne. It was most natural that the Dutch republic and the French king, the archdukes and his Catholic Majesty, should be filled with anxiety as to the probable effect of this change of individuals upon the fortunes of the war.

For this Dutch war of independence was the one absorbing and controlling interest in Christendom. Upon that vast, central, and, as men thought, baleful constellation the fates of humanity were dependent. Around it lesser political

[1] Meteren, 484. Camden, 661.

events were forced to gravitate, and, in accordance to their relation to it, were bright or obscure. It was inevitable that those whose vocation it was to ponder the aspects of the political firmament, the sages and high-priests who assumed to direct human action and to foretell human destiny, should now be more than ever perplexed.

Spain, since the accession of Philip III. to his father's throne, although rapidly declining in vital energy, had not yet disclosed its decrepitude to the world. Its boundless ambition survived as a political tradition rather than a real passion, while contemporaries still trembled at the vision of universal monarchy in which the successor of Charlemagne and of Charles V. was supposed to indulge.

Meantime, no feebler nor more insignificant mortal existed on earth than this dreaded sovereign.

Scarcely a hairdresser or lemonade-dealer in all Spain was less cognizant of the political affairs of the kingdom than was its monarch, for Philip's first care upon assuming the crown was virtually to abdicate in favour of the man soon afterwards known as the Duke of Lerma.

It is therefore only by courtesy and for convenience that history recognizes his existence at all, as surely no human being in the reign of Philip III. requires less mention than Philip III. himself.

I reserve for a subsequent chapter such rapid glances at the interior condition of that kingdom with which it seemed the destiny of the Dutch republic to be perpetually at war, as may be necessary to illustrate the leading characteristics of the third Philip's reign.

Meantime, as the great queen was no more, who was always too sagacious to doubt that the Dutch cause was her own—however disposed she might be to browbeat the Dutchmen—it seemed possible to Spain that the republic might at last be deprived of its only remaining ally. Tassis was despatched as chief of a legation, precursory to a more stately embassy to be confided to the Duke of Frias. The archdukes sent the prince of Arenberg, while from the united States came

young Henry of Nassau, associated with John of Olden-Barneveld, Falk, Brederode, and other prominent statesmen of the commonwealth.[2] Ministers from Denmark and Sweden, from the palatinate and from numerous other powers, small and great, were also collected to greet the rising sun in united Britain, while the awkward Scotchman, who was now called upon to play that prominent part in the world's tragi-comedy which had been so long and so majestically sustained by the "Virgin Queen," already began to tremble at the plaudits and the bustle which announced how much was expected of the new performer.

There was indeed a new sovereign upon the throne. That most regal spirit which had well expressed so many of the highest characteristics of the nation had fled. Mankind has long been familiar with the dark, closing hours of the illustrious reign. The great queen, moody, despairing, dying, wrapt in profoundest thought, with eyes fixed upon the ground or already gazing into infinity, was besought by the counsellors around her to name the man to whom she chose that the crown should devolve.

"Not to a Rough," said Elizabeth, sententiously and grimly.[3]

When the King of France was named, she shook her head. When Philip III. was suggested, she made a still more significant sign of dissent. When the King of Scots was mentioned, she nodded her approval, and again relapsed into silent meditation.[4]

She died, and James was King of Great Britain and

[2] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[3] "Poichè avvicinatisi all 'ultima ora de' suoi giorni e ricercata da quei signori del consiglio che quasi tutti la assistevano quale fosse la volontà sua ed a chi raccommandava il regno disse ella queste sole parole: no ad un *Rough* che in lingua inglese significa persona bassa e vile, ma ad una, ed accenando con la mano perchè perdè la parola, che portass ecorona. Le fu dimandato se al re di Francia ed ella con la testa mostrò che no, fu dimandata se a quel di Spagna e fece il medesimo atto, nominatole poi quello di Scozia diede segno questo essere il desiderio suo e poche ore dopo passò da questa vita con universal dispiacere."

[4] Ibid. The particulars of Elizabeth's death are narrated in Despatch 7 April, 1603, of Secretary Scaramelli. Senato iii. Secreta, A. V. G. See N. Barozzi, note, p. 45, of ser. iv. vol. unico.

Ireland. Cecil had become his prime minister long before the queen's eyes were closed. The hard-featured, rickety, fidgety, shambling, learned, most preposterous Scotchman hastened to take possession of the throne. Never could there have been a more unfit place or unfit hour for such a man.

England, although so small in dimensions, so meagre in population, so deficient, compared to the leading nations of Europe, in material and financial strength, had already her great future swelling in her heart. Intellectually and morally she was taking the lead among the nations. Even at that day she had produced much which neither she herself nor any other nation seemed destined to surpass.

Yet this most redoubtable folk only numbered about three millions, one-tenth of them inhabiting London.[5] With the Scots and Irish added they amounted to less than five millions of souls,[6] hardly a third as many as the homogeneous and martial people of that dangerous neighbour France.

Ireland was always rebellious ; a mere conquered province, hating her tyrant England's laws, religion, and people; loving Spain, and believing herself closely allied by blood as well as sympathy to that most Catholic land.

Scotland, on the accession of James, hastened to take possession of England. Never in history had two races detested each other more fervently.[7] The leeches and locusts

[5] Niccolo Molin, ambassador from Venice to James I., puts the population of London in 1607 at more than 300,000. Relazione in Barozzi and Berchet, ser. iv. vol. unico.

[6] Antonio Foscarini, Venetian ambassador in England in 1618 (Relazione in Brozzi and Berchet, ser. iv. vol. unico), estimates the whole population of the empire at 5,200,000 souls, of which number 3,560,000 are assigned to England, a little more than 1,000,000 to Scotland, and 500,000 to Ireland.

The total revenue he states as three millions scudi = 750,000*l.* sterling, almost entirely derived from England:—"Perchè la Scozia con fatica dà ottanta mila (80,000*l.*) scudi l'anno," and Ireland, producing a less sum than that, to which money had to be added from England for current expenses.

[7] "Essendosi il regno della Scozia unito a quello dell' Inghilterra solamente nella persona del presente re, tuttavia per la divisione e contrarietà degli animi che passa fra Scozzesi ed Inglesi non solo viene giudicato che la potenza di quel regno non sia cresciuta ma diminuita piuttosto: poichè l'odio fra di loro è passato tant' oltre che s'insidiano la vita l'un l'altro con maniere molto stravaganti. Onde molti Scozzesi e de' più principali per salvezza delle loro vite pensano di ritirarsi alle proprie case; e se non fosse la violenza per dire così che loro

of the north,[8] as they were universally designated in England, would soon have been swept forth from the country, or have left it of their own accord, had not the king employed all that he had of royal authority or of eloquent persuasion to retain them on the soil. Of union, save the personal union of the sceptre, there was no thought. As in Ireland there was hatred to England and adoration for Spain; so in Scotland, France was beloved quite as much as England was abhorred. Who could have foretold, or even hoped, that atoms so mutually repulsive would ever have coalesced into a sympathetic and indissoluble whole?

Even the virtues of James were his worst enemies. As generous as the day, he gave away with reckless profusion anything and everything that he could lay his hands upon. It was soon to appear that the great queen's most unlovely characteristic, her avarice, was a more blessed quality to the nation she ruled than the ridiculous prodigality of James.

Two thousand gowns, of the most expensive material, adorned with gold, pearls, and other bravery—for Elizabeth was very generous to herself—were found in the queen's wardrobe, after death. These magnificent and costly robes, not one of which had she vouchsafed to bestow upon or to bequeath to any of her ladies of honour, were now presented by her successor to a needy Scotch lord, who certainly did not intend to adorn his own person therewith.[9] "The hat was ever held out," said a splenetic observer, "and it was filled in overflowing measure by the new monarch."[10]

In a very short period he had given away—mainly to

fa il re per fermarli di già tutti ne se sariano andati." — N. Molin, Relazione.

[8] "Li (gli Scozzesi) chiamano locuste e sanguisughe d'Inghilterra, affermano che hanno trovato in quel regno le minere d'oro che dicono aver altre volte perduto in Scoz'a." — Marcantonio Correr, Relazione.

[9] "E per natura per educazione e per abito liberalissimo ed è tale la sua liberalità che quando fu assunto alla corona d'Inghilterra donò ad un Signor Scozzese tutte le vesti della regina Elizabetta ch'erano intorno due mille e d'un valor inestimabile essendo parte di esse fregiate d'oro, di perle e tutte richissime." — Francesco Contarini, Relazione.

[10] "Di una gran parte delle gioie della corona che valevano un tesoro fece mercede à diversi empiendosi di esse le mani senza alcun rigardo al valor loro e gettandole nel cappello di questo e di quello," &c. &c.—Ibid.

Scotchmen—at least two millions of crowns, in various articles of personal property.[11] Yet England was very poor.

The empire, if so it could be called, hardly boasted a regular revenue of more than two millions of dollars a-year ;[12] less than that of a fortunate individual or two, in our own epoch, both in Europe and America ; and not one-fifth part of the contemporary income of France. The hundred thousand dollars of Scotland's annual budget[13] did not suffice to pay its expenses, and Ireland was a constant charge upon the imperial exchequer.[14]

It is astounding, however, to reflect upon the pomp, extravagance, and inordinate pride which characterized the government and the court.

The expenses of James's household were at least five hundred thousand crowns,[15] or about one quarter of the whole revenue of the empire. Henry IV., with all his extravagance, did not spend more than one-tenth of the public income of France upon himself and his court.

Certainly if England were destined to grow great it would be in despite of its new monarch. Hating the People, most intolerant in religion, believing intensely in royal prerogative, thoroughly convinced of his regal as well as his personal infallibility, loathing that inductive method of thought which

[11] N. Molin, Relazione. "Essendo comune opinione che fra danari, gioie e beni stabili abbia donato il re più di due milioni la maggior parte a Scozzesi."

[12] N. Molin, Relazione. The ambassador puts the income of the crown domains at 125,000*l.* sterling, or about 500,000 dollars (scudi). Taxes and customs he reckons at 700,000 dollars, and income from miscellaneous sources at 100,000. To this total of 1,300,000 dollars he adds an annual parliamentary subsidy of 600,000 dollars (according to the average in Elizabeth's reign, although in 1607 James had not yet had one), and thus makes a general budget of 1,900,000 dols., or somewhat less than 500,000*l.* Marcantonio Correr, ambassador in 1611, gives nearly the same figures. The envoys of ten years later, Correr and F. Contarini, make the total revenue 3,000,000 dollars.

[13] N. Molin.

[14] "Il regno poi d'Irlanda non solo non apporta beneficio ma spesa piuttosto."—N. Molin. "Gli altri due regni di Scozia e d'Irlanda apportano seco più spese che rendite."—M. A. Correr, Relazione.

[15] N. Molin, Relazione. "E prima nel viver della sua casa si consuma un anno per l'altro 500,000 scudi." "Ha un milione e mezzo d'entrata (ducats, four to the pound, subsidies not counted) . . . . la spesa della sua casa arriva a ducati 500,000 l'anno." Francesco Contarini, amb. app. Giacomo I. Relazioni in Barozzi and Berchet, ser. i. vol. unico. "Nelle spese della casa eccede senz' alcuna comparazione tutti gli altri re cristiani."—Ibid.

was already leading the English nation so proudly on the road of intellectual advancement, shrinking from the love of free inquiry, of free action, of daring adventure, which was to be the real informing spirit of the great British nation; abhorring the Puritans—that is to say, one-third of his subjects[16]—in whose harsh but lofty nature he felt instinctively that popular freedom was enfolded—even as the overshadowing tree in the rigid husk—and sending them forth into the far distant wilderness to wrestle with wild beasts and with savages more ferocious than beasts; fearing and hating the Catholics as the sworn enemies of his realm, his race, and himself, trampling on them as much as he dared, forcing them into hypocrisy to save themselves from persecution or at least pecuniary ruin if they would worship God according to their conscience;[17] at deadly feud, therefore, on religious grounds, with much more than half his subjects—Puritans or Papists—and yet himself a Puritan in dogma and a Papist in Church government, if only the king could be pope; not knowing, indeed, whether a Puritan, or a Jesuit whom he called a Papist-Puritan,[18] should be deemed the more dis-

[16] "Tre sono le religioni che universalmente sono abbracciate da quei popoli: la cattolica ed apostolica romana, la protestante e la puritana: questa oltre il danno e la rovina delle anime tende a quella di principati e di monarchie ancora poichè è dirizzata tutta alla libertà ed al governo popolare; e perchè questo nome di libertà è molto dolce e grato ad ognuno è però molto facilmente abbracciata; onde si crede che il terzo di quei popoli sieno puritani ancorchè il rè e li suoi usino ogni arte por distruggerla."—M. A. Correr, Relazione.

"Sua Maestà odia questi puritani altre tanto quanto teme de' cattolici."—Ibid.

[17] "Dirò questo solo che un cattolico ricusante che s'intende quello che ricusa di andare alle loro chiese e prediche se ha il modo è obbligato a pagare 80 scudi al mese; se non ha da pagar tanto perde due terzi delli suoi beni; sicchè uno che averrà 600 ducati d'entrata ne perde 400; se è povero od artifice che non abbia beni stabili ogni mese da' ministri gli viene visitata la casa e levato gli si può dir ogni cosa poichè gli portano via sino il letto; se uno sarà convinto di avere udito messe, di avere tenuto un prete o gesuita in casa, anzi di avergli solamente parlato s'intende incorso in delitto di lesa Maestà onde senz' altro perde la roba e la vita. Un cattolico s'intende privo della protezione delle leggi in tanto che se sarà egli creditore di alcuno non protrà esercitar la sua azione contro il debitore perchè dalla giustizia non sarà abbracciata; se il cattolico sara oltraggiato in parole o in fatti non ha ricorso alla giustizia: intanto che li poveri cattolici sono costituti in una condizione infelicissima, pretendendo con questa via il re e quelli che governano di andar a poco a poco costringendo e riducendo per dir così a niente la cattolica religione."—N. Molin, Relazione.

[18] "Aborrisce sopra tutti li padri Gesuiti . . . . e compara appunto la

gusting or dangerous animal; already preparing for his unfortunate successor a path to the scaffold, by employing all the pedantry, both theological and philosophical, at his command to bring parliaments into contempt, and to place the royal prerogative on a level with Divinity; at the head of a most martial, dauntless, and practical nation, trembling, with unfortunate physical timidity, at the sight of a drawn sword; ever scribbling or haranguing in Latin, French, or broad Scotch,[19] when the world was arming, it must always be a special wonder that one who might have been a respectable, even a useful, pedagogue, should by the caprice of destiny have been permitted, exactly at that epoch, to be one of the most contemptible and mischievous of kings.[20]

But he had a most effective and energetic minister. Even as in Spain and in France at the same period, the administration of government was essentially in one pair of hands.

Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, ever since the termination of the splendid duumvirate of his father and Walsingham, had been in reality supreme.[21] The proud and terrible hunchback, who never forgave, nor forgot to destroy, his enemies,[22] had now triumphed over the last passion of the doting queen. Essex had gone to perdition.

Son of the great minister who had brought the mother of James to the scaffold, Salisbury had already extorted forgive-

loro dottrina di macchinar contro li Stati e vite dei principi con quelle dei puritani perciò li chiama puritani papisti."—M. A. Correr, Ralazione.

[19] "È pieno di eloquenza non solo nella propria sua lingua ma anco in diverse altre e nella francese e latina particolarmente." — Francesco Contarini. Relazione.

[20] "Ma molto più dispiace l'aver Sua Maestà abbandonato in tutto e per tutto il governo dei suoi regni, rimettendo il tutto al suo consiglio, non volendo egli nè trattar nè pensar ad altro che alla caccia . . . . Così il presente re resta piuttosto spregiato ed odiato che altrimenti; essendo infine la natura di S. M. piuttosto inclinata a vivere retiramente con otto o dieci dei suoi che viver alla libera, come è il costume del paese ed il desiderio del popolo."—Ibid.

[21] "L'autorità del quale è così assoluta che con verità si può dire esser egli il re e governatore di quella monarchia."—N. Molin, Ralazione.

[22] "È astuto e sagace e persecutore acerrimo dei suoi nemici: il che si vede dall' effetto perchè ne ha avuto molti e tutti li ha fatti precipitare ancorchè che fossero uomini eminentissimi . . . . . è amico de' suoi amici è fa volentieri servizio: ma pero è più inclinato alla vendetta che all'amore: è uomo superbo e terribile." —Ibid. Compare M. A. Correr, Relazione.

ness for that execution from the feeble king. Before Elizabeth was in her grave, he was already as much the favourite of her successor as of herself, governing Scotland as well as England, and being Prime Minister of Great Britain before Great Britain existed.[23]

Lord High Treasurer and First Secretary of State, he was now all in all in the council. The other great lords, high-born and highly titled as they were and served at their banquets by hosts of lackeys on their knees—[24] Nottinghams, Northamptons, Suffolks—[25] were, after all, ciphers or at best, mere pensioners of Spain. For all the venality of Europe was not confined to the Continent.[26] Spain spent at least one hundred and fifty thousand crowns[27] annually among the leading courtiers of James while his wife, Anne of Denmark, a Papist at heart, whose private boudoir was filled with pictures and images of the Madonna and the saints, had already received one hundred thousand dollars in solid cash from the Spanish court, besides much jewelry, and other valuable

[23] "Perche s'insinuò nella grazia del presente re ajutandolo como S. M medesima mi ha detto e occultamente in vita della regina e scopertamente dopo la merte. Così non solo gli è riuscito di cancellar dalla sua memoria la morte della madre della quale fu principalmente autore il padre di esso conte ma ha condotto la propria fortuna a quella tanta eminenza nella quale si trova al presente."—M. A. Correr, Relazione.

[24] N. Molin, Ralazione.

[25] "Il co: di Northampton custode del privato sigillo . . . . . il gran ammiraglio conte di Suffolk gran ciamberlano . . . . . tutti tre sono stati provisionati annualmente da Spagna con qualcheduno altro del consiglio regio." —M. A. Correr, Relazione.

[26] "Nè vi essendo alcuno che o tardi o per tempo non sia necessitato di ricorrer al consiglio di qui è che ognuno procura di acquistarsi la grazia e la protezione di alcuno dei consiglieri il che non si può fare in quel paese con altri mezzi nè con altre vie che con presenti e donativi; li quali sono così ordinarij in quei paesi che chi più riceve è più stimato ed onorato ricevendo non solo da sudditi ma da stranieri e da ministri di principi ancora siccome si è veduto in diverse occasioni."—N. Molin, Relazione D'Inghilterra.

"Rimettere il tutto si suoi ministri li quali sono si fattamente interessati che senza li modi che ordinariamente sogliono usar li Spagnoli non se ne può ricevere quel beneficio che si desidera." Ibid. "Avendo molti di essi (ministri) pensioni da Spagna, altri son ben affetti verso la Francia e forse il minor numero e quello che mira al solo ben e servizio del regno e di S. M." Francesco Contarini. Relazione. "La Spagna . . . . usando alcuna volta con la Maestà sua l'esca de' matrimonii con li ministri quella delle pensioni e donativi."—M. A. Correr, Relazione.

[27] "All' ambasciatore di Spagna residente alla corte d'Inghilterra sono mandati ogni anno 150,000 scudi, non per sua provizione ma per altri fini, e però impetra gran cose."—Fran. Contarini, Relazione.

things.[28] To negotiate with Government in England was to bribe, even as at Paris or Madrid. Gold was the only pass-key to justice, to preferment, or to power.

Yet the foreign subsidies to the English court were, after all, of but little avail at that epoch.[29] No man had influence but Cecil, and he was too proud, too rich, too powerful to be bribed.[30] Alone with clean fingers among courtiers and ministers, he had, however, accumulated a larger fortune than any. His annual income was estimated at two hundred thousand crowns, and he had a vast floating capital, always well employed. Among other investments, he had placed half a million on interest in Holland,[31] and it was to be expected, therefore, that he should favour the cause of the republic, rebellious and upstart though it were.

The pigmy, as the late queen had been fond of nicknaming him, was the only giant in the Government. Those crooked shoulders held up, without flinching, the whole burden of the State. Pale, handsome, anxious, suffering, and intellectual of visage, with his indomitable spirit, ready eloquence, and nervous energy, he easily asserted supremacy over all the intriguers, foreign and domestic, the stipendiaries, the generals, the admirals, the politicians, at court, as well as over the Scotch Solomon who sat on the throne.

But most certainly it was for the public good of Britain

[28] N. Molin, Relazione, &c. M. A. Correr, Relazione. "Vanno nutrendo le speranze di poter un giorno metter mano in quel regno (d'Inghilterra) e perciò col solito titolo di avantaggiare la fede cattolica mantengono diversi collegi d'Inglesi per spargere con loro beneficio i soggetti che escono da quelli e dopo la pace hanno dispensati fra quella nazione molti denari fra quali la regina ha avuto in contanti più di cento mille scudi oltre diverse gioie e altre cose di molto valsente."—F. Priuli, Relazione di Spagna, 1604–1608. N. Molin.

[29] "Pare che li Spagnuoli si sieno astenuti questi due ultimi anni per il poco frutto che ne cavano."—M. A. Correr, Relazione.

[30] "Nè ha mai voluto accettar pensioni."—M. A. Correr, Relazione.

[31] "Della sua richezza non voglio parlare perocche è cosa che eccede il creder d'ognuno; ma quasi tutto ha in contanti in diverse piazze di Europa, ma sotto diversi nomi; e mi è stato affermato che in Olanda solamente abbia cinque cento mille scudi li quali gli rendono utili tali che se ne può contantare." Ibid. "Essendo opinione che degli uffici della corona abbi cavato meglio di 200,000 scudi all' anno, onde ha comprato molta quantità di terreni e gira denari in diverse piazze specialmente gran somma in Olanda che profittano più che mediocremente, cosa che lo tiene affezionato ed obbligato agli interessi di quelle provincie."—Ibid.

that Europe should be pacified. It is very true that the piratical interest would suffer, and this was a very considerable and influential branch of business. So long as war existed anywhere, the corsairs of England sailed with the utmost effrontery from English ports, to prey upon the commerce of friend and foe alike. After a career of successful plunder, it was not difficult for the rovers to return to their native land, and, with the proceeds of their industry, to buy themselves positions of importance, both social and political. It was not the custom to consider too curiously the source of the wealth. If it was sufficient to dazzle the eyes of the vulgar, it was pretty certain to prove the respectability of the owner.[32]

It was in vain that the envoys of the Dutch and Venetian republics sought redress for the enormous damage inflicted on their commerce by English pirates, and invoked the protection of public law. It was always easy for learned jurisconsuls to prove such depredations to be consistent with international usage and with sound morality. Even at that

[32] "Per assicurar questi mari dai bertoni inglesi che hanno apportato e tuttora apportano tanto danno alle navi e sudditi di Vostra Serenità che trafficano in levante: perchè non è dubbio per la informazione che ne ho avuto che molti vascelli partono d'Inghilterra sotto il nome di mercanti con qualche poco di carico per il viaggio di levante ma il loro fine è principalmente di far qualche preda se la occasione si presenta; onde partendo con questo nome di mercanti viene levata l'occasione ai rappresentanti di Vostra Serenità di opporsi alla loro uscita; ma in effetto secondo l'occasione esercitano l'ufficio di corsari e quando loro riesce di far qualche preda si contentano di restare esuli e privi della patria per qualche spazio di tempo e con qualche donativo unico remedio in quel paese per superar tutte le difficoltà di poter ripatriare e godersi la guadagnata preda."—N. Molin, Relazione.

"Perchè con la pace viene loro levato il modo di andar in corso con che molti si sono arrichiti perchè sotto pretesto di andar contrò i nemici depredavano anco le navi degli amici come è pur troppo manifesto a V. S." —Ibid.

"Sono gli Inglesi sopra tutti gli uomini dediti al corseggiare, ne facevano particolar professione in tempo della regina Elizabetta la quale la permetteva contro gli Spagnuoli ed animava li suoi sudditi ad applicarvisi . . . . . di quà sono procedute ricchezze grandi nelli particolari, accrescimenti delli dazii pubblici e sperienza e gloria nelli cittadini ed augumento di forze considerabilissime a tutto il regno. Ora queste depredazioni che vietate dalla pace contro Spagnuoli si sono indifferentemente voltate sopra tutti vengono più d'ogni tristizia odiate dal re . . . . . non di meno come non si trova officio di tanta santità e giustizia che l'avarizia degli uomini non la soglia guastar e corromper; così è opinione che quelli medesimi che hanno principal carico di perseguitare questi scellerati li abbino spesse volte favoriti e protetti." —Marc Antonio Correr, Ambasc. appresso Giacomo I. 1611, in Barozzi and Berchet. S. iv. vol. unico.

period, although England was in population and in wealth so insignificant, it possessed a lofty, insular contempt for the opinions and the doctrines of other nations, and expected, with perfect calmness, that her own principles should be not only admitted, but spontaneously adored.[33]

Yet the piratical interest was no longer the controlling one. That city on the Thames, which already numbered more than three hundred thousand inhabitants,[34] had discovered that more wealth was to be accumulated by her bustling shopkeepers in the paths of legitimate industry than by a horde of rovers over the seas, however adventurous and however protected by Government.

As for France, she was already defending herself against piracy by what at the period seemed a masterpiece of internal improvement. The Seine, the Loire, and the Rhone were soon to be united in one chain of communication. Thus merchandise might be water-borne from the channel to the Mediterranean, without risking the five or six months' voyage by sea then required from Havre to Marseilles, and exposure along the whole coast to attack from the corsairs of England, Spain, and Barbary.[35]

The envoys of the States-General had a brief audience of the new sovereign, in which little more than phrases of compliment were pronounced.

"We are here," said Barneveld, "between grief and joy. We have lost her whose benefits to us we can never describe in

[33] "Essendo l'Inglese per natura superbo crede che ognuno per natura sia obbligato di accarezzarlo non solo ma di adorarlo." — Ibid. N. Molin, Relazione.

[34] Molin.

[35] Angelo Badoer, Ambasc. in Francia, Relazione in Barozzi and Berchet, ser. ii. vol. i. "Ma finito questo taglio che si lavora per far entrare la Loira nella Senna come ho detto s'è risolto di farne un altro per far entrare il Rodano che passa Lione nella Loira essendo già il disegno fatto con che s'andrebbe da un mare all' altro sempre per i fiumi senza aver mai a smontare in terra e quando questo resti effettuato, come ponendovisi le mani egli resterebbe in non lunghi anni mentre continui la pace nella Francia con più brevità con più sicurezza e con grand' utile a quel regno si manderebbero le merci dal Mediterraneo sempre per acqua sino nell' Oceano senza averle a mandare per tanto mare come si fa ora che le navi hanno a circondare tutta la Spagna per arrivare in quelle parti con tanto rischio di venti e di corsari oltre il tempo di cinque o sei mesi che alle volte consumano nel viaggio."

words, but we have found a successor who is heir not only to her kingdom but to all her virtues."[35] And with this exordium the great Advocate plunged at once into the depths of his subject, so far as was possible in an address of ceremony. He besought the king not to permit Spain, standing on the neck of the provinces, to grasp from that elevation at other empires. He reminded James of his duty to save those of his own religion from the clutch of a sanguinary superstition, to drive away those lurking satellites of the Roman pontiff who considered Britain their lawful prey. He implored him to complete the work so worthily begun by Elizabeth. If all those bound by one interest should now, he urged, unite their efforts, the Spaniard, deprived not only of the Netherlands, but, if he were not wise in time, banished from the ocean and stripped of all his transmarine possessions, would be obliged to consent to a peace founded on the only secure basis, equality of strength. The envoy concluded by beseeching the king for assistance to Ostend, now besieged for two years long.[36]

But James manifested small disposition to melt in the fervour of the Advocate's eloquence. He answered with a few cold commonplaces. Benignant but extremely cautious, he professed goodwill enough to the States but quite as much for Spain, a power with which, he observed, he had never quarrelled, and from which he had received the most friendly offices. The archdukes, too, he asserted, had never been hostile to the realm, but only to the Queen of England. In brief, he was new to English affairs, required time to look about him, but would not disguise that his genius was literary, studious, and tranquil, and much more inclined to peace than to war.[37]

In truth, James had cause to look very sharply about him. It required an acute brain and steady nerves to understand and to control the whirl of parties and the conflict of interests and intrigues, the chameleon shiftings of character and colour, at this memorable epoch of transition in the realm which he

[35] Grotius, xii. 612. Meteren, *ubi sup.* [36] Ibid. [37] Ibid.

had just inherited. There was a Scotch party, favourable on the whole to France; there was a Spanish party, there was an English party, and, more busy than all, there was a party—not Scotch, nor French, nor English, nor Spanish—that un-dying party in all commonwealths or kingdoms which ever fights for itself and for the spoils.

France and Spain had made peace with each other at Vervins five years before, and had been at war ever since.

Nothing could be plainer nor more cynical than the language exchanged between the French monarch and the representative of Spain. That Philip III.—as the Spanish Government by a convenient fiction was always called—was the head and front of the great Savoy-Biron conspiracy to take Henry's life and dismember his kingdom, was hardly a stage secret. Yet diplomatic relations were still preserved between the two countries, and wonderful diplomatic interviews had certainly been taking place in Paris.

Ambassador Tassis had walked with lofty port into Henry's cabinet, disdaining to salute any of the princes of the blood or high functionaries of state in the apartments through which he passed, and with insolent defiance had called Henry to account for his dealing with the Dutch rebels.

"Sire, the king my master finds it very strange," he said, "that you still continue to assist his rebels in Holland, and that you shoot at his troops on their way to the Netherlands. If you don't abstain from such infractions of his rights he prefers open war to being cheated by such a pretended peace. Hereupon I demand your reply."

"Mr. Ambassador," replied the king, "I find it still more strange that your master is so impudent as to dare to make such complaints—he who is daily making attempts upon my life and upon this State. Even if I do assist the Hollanders, what wrong is that to him? It is an organized commonwealth, powerful, neighbourly, acknowledging no subjection to him. But your master is stirring up rebellion in my own kingdom, addressing himself to the princes of my blood and

my most notable officers, so that I have been obliged to cut off the head of one of the most beloved of them all. By these unchristian proceedings he has obliged me to take sides with the Hollanders, whom I know to be devoted to me; nor have I done anything for them except to pay the debts I owed them. I know perfectly well that the king your master is the head of this conspiracy, and that the troops of Naples were meditating an attack upon my kingdom. I have two letters written by the hand of your master to Marshal Biron, telling him to trust Fuentes as if it were himself, and it is notorious that Fuentes has projected and managed all the attempts to assassinate me. Do you think you have a child to deal with? The late King of Spain knew me pretty well. If this one thinks himself wiser I shall let him see who I am. Do you want peace or war? I am ready for either."

The ambassador, whose head had thus been so vigorously washed—as Henry expressed it in recounting the interview afterwards to the Dutch envoy, Dr. Aerssens—stammered some unintelligible excuses, and humbly begged his Majesty not to be offended. He then retired quite crest-fallen, and took leave most politely of everybody as he went, down even to the very grooms of the chambers.

"You must show your teeth to the Spaniard," said Henry to Aerssens, "if you wish for a quiet life."

Here was unsophisticated diplomacy; for the politic Henry, who could forgive assassins and conspirators, crowned or otherwise, when it suited his purpose to be lenient, knew that it was on this occasion very prudent to use the gift of language, not in order to conceal, but to express his thoughts.

"I left the king as red as a turkey-cock," said Tassis, as soon as he got home that morning, "and I was another turkey-cock. We have been talking a little bit of truth to each other."[38]

In truth, it was impossible, as the world was then con-

[38] "Ik weet doen Taxis t'huys quam dat hy seyde, ik hebbe den Coninck root als een callichoen gelaeten ende ik ben een ander. Wy hebben malcan

stituted, that France and Spain, in spite of many secret sympathies, should not be enemies; that France, England, and the Dutch commonwealth, although cordially disliking each other, should not be allies.

Even before the death of Elizabeth a very remarkable interview had taken place at Dover, in which the queen had secretly disclosed the great thoughts with which that most imperial brain was filled just before its boundless activity was to cease for ever.

She had wished for a personal interview with the French king, whose wit and valour she had always heartily admired. Henry, on his part, while unmercifully ridiculing that preter-human vanity which he fed with fantastic adulation, never failed to do justice to her genius, and had been for a moment disposed to cross the channel, or even to hold council with her on board ship midway between the two countries.[39] It was however found impracticable to arrange any such meeting, and the gossips of the day hinted that the great Henry, whose delight was in battle, and who had never been known to shrink from danger on dry land, was appalled at the idea of sea-sickness, and even dreaded the chance of being kidnapped by the English pirates.[40]

The corsairs who drove so profitable a business at that period by plundering the merchantmen of their enemy, of their Dutch and French allies, and of their own nation, would assuredly have been pleased with such a prize.

The queen had confided to De Bethune that she had something to say to the king which she could never reveal to other ears than his, but when the proposed visit of Henry was abandoned, it was decided that his confidential minister should slip across the channel before Elizabeth returned to her palace at Greenwich.

d.ren wat waerheyt gesëyt," &c.—Aerssens to the States-General, 4 Oct. 1602. Hague Archives MS.

Henry recounted these conversations with his own lips to Dr. Aerssens, who communicated them to the States-General in his secret letters. I have read them in the Fransche Depêchen, Aº. 1602–1607, Royal Archives at the Hague MS. See especially Aerssens to the States-General, 4 and 18 October, 1602.

[39] Mémoires de Sully, iv. 34–46, anno 1601.

[40] Ibid.

De Bethune accordingly came incognito from Calais to Dover, in which port he had a long and most confidential interview with the queen. Then and there the woman, nearly seventy years of age, who governed despotically the half of a small island, while the other half was in the possession of a man whose mother she had slain, and of a people who hated the English more than they hated the Spaniards or the French—a queen with some three millions of loyal but most turbulent subjects in one island, and with about half-a-million ferocious rebels in another requiring usually an army of twenty thousand disciplined soldiers to keep them in a kind of subjugation, with a revenue fluctuating between eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, and the half of that sum, and with a navy of a hundred privateersmen—disclosed to the French envoy a vast plan for regulating the polity and the religion of the civilized world, and for remodelling the map of Europe.[41]

There should be three religions, said Elizabeth—not counting the dispensation from Mecca, about which Turk and Hun might be permitted to continue their struggle on the crepuscular limits of civilization. Everywhere else there should be toleration only for the churches of Peter, of Luther, and of Calvin. The house of Austria was to be humbled—the one branch driven back to Spain and kept there, the other branch to be deprived of the imperial crown, which was to be disposed of as in times past by the votes of the princely electors There should be two republics—the Swiss and the Dutch—each of those commonwealths to be protected by France and England, and each to receive considerable parings out of the possessions of Spain and the empire.

Finally, all Christendom was to be divided off into a certain number of powers, almost exactly equal to each other; the weighing, measuring, and counting, necessary to obtain this international equilibrium, being of course the duty of the king and queen when they should sit some day together at table.

[41] Mémoires de Sully, iv. 34–36, anno 1601.

Thus there were five points; sovereigns and politicians having always a fondness for a neat summary in five or six points. Number one, to remodel the electoral system of the holy Roman empire. Number two, to establish the republic of the United Provinces. Number three, to do as much for Switzerland. Number four, to partition Europe. Number five, to reduce all religions to three.[42] Nothing could be more majestic, no plan fuller fraught with tranquillity for the rulers of mankind and their subjects. Thrice happy the people, having thus a couple of heads with crowns upon them and brains within them to prescribe what was to be done in this world and believed as to the next!

The illustrious successor of that great queen now stretches her benignant sceptre over two hundred millions of subjects, and the political revenues of her empire are more than a hundredfold those of Elizabeth; yet it would hardly now be thought great statesmanship or sound imperial policy for a British sovereign even to imagine the possibility of the five points which filled the royal English mind at Dover.

But Henry was as much convinced as Elizabeth of the necessity and the possibility of establishing the five points, and De Bethune had been astonished at the exact similarity of the conclusion which those two sovereign intellects had reached, even before they had been placed in communion with each other. The death of the queen had not caused any change in the far-reaching designs of which the king now remained the sole executor, and his first thought, on the accession of James, was accordingly to despatch De Bethune, now created Marquis de Rosny, as ambassador extraordinary to England, in order that the new sovereign might be secretly but thoroughly instructed as to the scheme for remodelling Christendom.[43]

As Rosny was also charged with the duty of formally congratulating King James, he proceeded upon his journey with remarkable pomp. He was accompanied by two hundred gentlemen of quality, specially attached to his embassy—

[42] Mémoires de Sully, iv. 34–36, anno 1601.

[43] Ibid. 260, *seqq.*

young city fops, as he himself described them, who were out of their element whenever they left the pavement of Paris —and by an equal number of valets, grooms, and cooks.[44] Such a retinue was indispensable to enable an ambassador to transact the public business and to maintain the public dignity in those days; unproductive consumption being accounted most sagacious and noble.

Before reaching the English shore the marquis was involved in trouble. Accepting the offer of the English vice-admiral lying off Calais, he embarked with his suite in two English vessels, much to the dissatisfaction of De Vic, vice-admiral of France, who was anxious to convey the French ambassador in the war-ships of his country. There had been suspicion afloat as to the good understanding between England and Spain, caused by the great courtesy recently shown to the Count of Arenberg, and there was intense irritation among all the seafaring people of France on account of the exploits of the English corsairs upon their coast.[45] Rosny thought it best to begin his embassy by an act of conciliation, but soon had cause to repent his decision.

In mid-channel they were met by De Vic's vessels with the French banner displayed, at which sight the English commander was so wroth that he forthwith ordered a broadside to be poured into the audacious foreigner; swearing with mighty oaths that none but the English flag should be shown in those waters. And thus, while conveying a French ambassador and three hundred Frenchmen on a sacred mission to the British sovereign, this redoubtable mariner of England prepared to do battle with the ships of France. It was with much difficulty and some prevarication that Rosny appeased the strife, representing that the French flag had only been raised in order that it might be dipped, in honour of the French ambassador, as the ships passed each other. The full-

15 June, 1603. shotted broadside was fired from fifty guns, but the English commander consented, at De Rosny's representations, that it should be discharged wide of the mark.[46]

[44] Mémoires de Sully, iv. 268; v. 21. [45] Ibid. iv. 272. [46] Ibid. 273–6.

A few shots, however, struck the side of one of the French vessels, and at the same time, as Cardinal Richelieu afterwards remarked, pierced the heart of every patriotic Frenchman.[47]

The ambassador made a sign, which De Vic understood, to lower his flag and to refrain from answering the fire.[48] Thus a battle between allies, amid the most amazing circumstances, was avoided, but it may well be imagined how long and how deeply the poison of the insult festered.

Such an incident could hardly predispose the ambassador in favour of the nation he was about to visit, or strengthen his hope of laying, not only the foundation of a perpetual friendship between the two crowns, but of effecting the palingenesis of Europe. Yet no doubt Sully—as the world has so long learned to call him—was actuated by lofty sentiments in many respects in advance of his age. Although a brilliant and successful campaigner in his youth, he detested war, and looked down with contempt at political systems which had not yet invented anything better than gunpowder for the arbitrament of international disputes. Instead of war being an occasional method of obtaining peace, it pained him to think that peace seemed only a process for arriving at war. Surely it was no epigram in those days, but the simplest statement of commonplace fact, that war was the normal condition of Christians. Alas! will it be maintained that in the two and a half centuries which have since elapsed the world has made much progress in a higher direction? Is there yet any appeal among the most civilized nations except to the logic of the largest battalions and the eloquence of the biggest guns?

De Rosny came to be the harbinger of a political millennium, and he heartily despised war. The schemes, nevertheless, which were as much his own as his master's, and which he was instructed to lay before the English monarch as exclusively his own, would have required thirty years of

[47] Mémoires de Sully, iv. 273–6, and notes. [48] Ibid.

successful and tremendous warfare before they could have a beginning of development.

It is not surprising that so philosophical a mind as his, while still inclining to pacific designs, should have been led by what met his eyes and ears to some rather severe generalizations.

"It is certain that the English hate us," he said, "and with a hatred so strong and so general that one is tempted to place it among the natural dispositions of this people. Yet it is rather the effect of their pride and their presumption; since there is no nation in Europe more haughty, more disdainful, more besotted with the idea of its own excellence. If you were to take their word for it, mind and reason are only found with them; they adore all their opinions and despise those of all other nations; and it never occurs to them to listen to others, or to doubt themselves. . . . . Examine what are called with them maxims of state; you will find nothing but the laws of pride itself, adopted through arrogance or through indolence." [49]

"Placed by nature amidst the tempestuous and variable ocean," he wrote to his sovereign, "they are as shifting, as impetuous, as changeable as its waves. So self-contradictory and so inconsistent are their actions almost in the same instant as to make it impossible that they should proceed from the same persons and the same mind. Agitated and urged by their pride and arrogance alone, they take all their imaginations and extravagances for truths and realities; the objects of their desires and affections for inevitable events; not balancing and measuring those desires with the actual condition of things, nor with the character of the people with whom they have to deal." [50]

When the ambassador arrived in London he was lodged at Arundel palace. He at once became the cynosure of all indigenous parties and of adventurous politicians from every

[49] Mémoires, iv. 291, 292. Compare the ambassador's letters in Vittorio Siri, vol. i.

[50] Rosny to the King, 13 June, 1603, in Vittorio Siri. Memorie Recondite, i. 226.

part of Europe ; few knowing how to shape their course since the great familiar lustre had disappeared from the English sky.

Rosny found the Scotch lords sufficiently favourable to France ; the English Catholic grandees, with all the Howards and the lord high admiral at their head, excessively inclined to Spain, and a great English party detesting both Spain and France with equal fervour and well enough disposed to the United Provinces, not as hating that commonwealth less but the two great powers more.

The ambassador had arrived with the five points, not in his portfolio but in his heart, and they might after all be concentrated in one phrase—Down with Austria, up with the Dutch republic. On his first interview with Cecil, who came to arrange for his audience with the king, he found the secretary much disposed to conciliate both Spain and the empire, and to leave the provinces to shift for themselves. He spoke of Ostend as of a town not worth the pains taken to preserve it, and of the India trade as an advantage of which a true policy required that the United Provinces should be deprived.[51] Already the fine commercial instinct of England had scented a most formidable rival on the ocean.

As for the king, he had as yet declared himself for no party, while all parties were disputing among each other for mastery over him. James found himself, in truth, as much astray in English politics as he was a foreigner upon English earth. Suspecting every one, afraid of every one, he was in mortal awe, most of all, of his wife, who being the daughter of one Protestant sovereign and wife of another, and queen of a united realm dependent for its very existence on antagonism to Spain and Rome, was naturally inclined to Spanish politics and the Catholic faith.

The turbulent and intriguing Anne of Denmark was not at the moment in London, but James was daily expecting and De Bethune dreading her arrival.

[51] Letter last cited, 307.

The ambassador knew very well that, although the king talked big in her absence about the forms which he intended to prescribe for her conduct, he would take orders from her as soon as she arrived, refuse her nothing, conceal nothing from her, and tremble before her as usual.[52]

The king was not specially prejudiced in favour of the French monarch or his ambassador, for he had been told that Henry had occasionally spoken of him as captain of arts and doctor of arms, and that both the Marquis de Rosny and his brother were known to have used highly disrespectful language concerning him.

Before his audience, De Rosny received a private visit from Barneveld and the deputies of the States-General, and was informed that since his arrival they had been treated with more civility by the king. Previously he had refused to see them after the first official reception, had not been willing to grant Count Henry of Nassau a private audience, and had spoken publicly of the States as seditious rebels.

On the 21st June Barneveld had a long private interview with the ambassador at Arundel palace, when he exerted all his eloquence to prove the absolute necessity of an offensive and defensive alliance between France and the United Provinces if the independence of the republic were ever to be achieved. Unless a French army took the field at once, Ostend would certainly fall, he urged, and resistance to the Spaniards would soon afterwards cease.[53]

21 June, 1603.

It is not probable that the Advocate felt in his heart so much despair as his words indicated, but he was most anxious that Henry should openly declare himself the protector of the young commonwealth, and not indisposed perhaps to exaggerate the dangers, grave as they were without doubt, by which its existence was menaced.

The ambassador however begged the Hollander to renounce any such hopes, assuring him that the king had no intention

[52] Despatches of Rosny, in Siri, i. 231.

[53] Ibid. 309, 310. Compare Rosny's letter to the King, in Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, II. 206–210.

of publicly and singly taking upon his shoulders the whole burden of war with Spain, the fruits of which would not be his to gather. Certainly before there had been time thoroughly to study the character and inclinations of the British monarch it would be impossible for De Rosny to hold out any encouragement in this regard. He then asked Barneveld what he had been able to discover during his residence in London as to the personal sentiments of James.

The Advocate replied that at first the king, yielding to his own natural tendencies, and to the advice of his counsellors, had refused the Dutch deputies every hope, but that subsequently reflecting, as it would seem, that peace would cost England very dear if English inaction should cause the Hollanders to fall again under the dominion of the Catholic king, or to find their only deliverance in the protection of France, and beginning to feel more acutely how much England had herself to fear from a power like Spain, he had seemed to awake out of a profound sleep, and promised to take these important affairs into consideration.

Subsequently he had fallen into a dreary abyss of indecision, where he still remained.[54] It was certain however that he would form no resolution without the concurrence of the King of France, whose ambassador he had been so impatiently expecting, and whose proposition to him of a double marriage between their respective children had given him much satisfaction.

De Rosny felt sure that the Dutch statesmen were far too adroit to put entire confidence in anything said by James, whether favourable or detrimental to their cause. He conjured Barneveld therefore, by the welfare of his country, to conceal nothing from him in regard to the most secret resolutions that might have been taken by the States in the event of their being abandoned by England, or in case of their being embarrassed by a sudden demand on the part of that power for the cautionary towns offered to Elizabeth.[55]

Barneveld, thus pressed, and considering the ambassador

[54] Letter of Rosny, *ubi sup.* [55] Ibid, 313.

as the confidential counsellor of a sovereign who was the republic's only friend, no longer hesitated. Making a merit to himself of imparting an important secret, he said that the state-council of the commonwealth had resolved to elude at any cost the restoration of the cautionary towns.[56]

The interview was then abruptly terminated by the arrival of the Venetian envoy.

The 22nd of June arrived. The marquis had ordered mourning suits for his whole embassy and retinue, by particular command of his sovereign, who wished to pay this public tribute to the memory of the great queen.

22 June, 1603.

To his surprise and somewhat to his indignation, he was however informed that no one, stranger or native, Scotchman or Englishman, had been permitted to present himself to the king in black, that his appearance there in mourning would be considered almost an affront, and that it was a strictly enforced rule at court to abstain from any mention of Queen Elizabeth, and to affect an entire oblivion of her reign.[57]

At the last moment, and only because convinced that he might otherwise cause the impending negotiations utterly to fail, the ambassador consented to attire himself, the hundred and twenty gentlemen selected from his diplomatic family to accompany him on this occasion, and all his servants, in gala costume. The royal guards, with the Earl of Derby at their head, came early in the afternoon to Arundel House to escort him to the Thames, and were drawn up on the quay as the marquis and his followers embarked in the splendid royal barges provided to convey them to Greenwich.[58]

On arriving at their destination they were met at the landing by the Earl of Northumberland, and escorted with great pomp and through an infinite multitude of spectators to the palace. Such was the crowd, without and within, of courtiers and common people, that it was a long time before the marquis, preceded by his hundred and twenty gentlemen, reached the hall of audience.

[56] Letter of Rosny, *ubi sup.* [57] Ibid, 320, 321. [58] Ibid, 323, *seqq.*

At last he arrived at the foot of the throne, when James arose and descended eagerly two steps of the dais in order to greet the ambassador. He would have descended them all had not one of the counsellors plucked him by the sleeve, whispering that he had gone quite far enough.

"And if I honour this ambassador," cried James, in a loud voice, "more than is usual, I don't intend that it shall serve as a precedent for others. I esteem and love him particularly, because of the affection which I know he cherishes for me, of his firmness in our religion, and of his fidelity to his master." [59]

Much more that was personally flattering to the marquis was said thus emphatically by James. To all this the ambassador replied, not by a set discourse, but only by a few words of compliment, expressing his sovereign's regrets at the death of Queen Elizabeth, and his joy at the accession of the new sovereign. He then delivered his letters of credence, and the complimentary conversation continued; the king declaring that he had not left behind him in Scotland his passion for the monarch of France, and that even had he found England at war with that country on his accession he would have instantly concluded a peace with a prince whom he so much venerated.

Thus talking, the king caused his guest to ascend with him to the uppermost steps of the dais, babbling on very rapidly and skipping abruptly from one subject to another. De Rosny took occasion to express his personal esteem and devotion, and was assured by the king in reply that the slanders in regard to him which had reached the royal ears had utterly failed of their effect. It was obvious that they were the invention of Spanish intriguers who wished to help that nation to universal monarchy. Then he launched forth into general and cordial abuse of Spain, much to the satisfaction of Count Henry of Nassau, who stood near enough to hear a good deal of the conversation, and of the other Dutch deputies who were moving about, quite unknown, in the crowd. He

[59] Letter of Rosny. Siri, vol. i. 324.

denounced very vigorously the malignity of the Spaniards in lighting fires everywhere in their neighbours' possessions, protested that he would always oppose their wicked designs, but spoke contemptuously of their present king as too feeble of mind and body ever to comprehend or to carry out the projects of his predecessors.

Among other gossip, James asked the envoy if he went to hear the Protestant preaching in London. Being answered in the affirmative, he expressed surprise, having been told, he said, that it was Rosny's intention to repudiate his religion as De Sancy had done, in order to secure his fortunes. The marquis protested that such a thought had never entered his head, but intimated that the reports might come from his familiar intercourse with the papal nuncius and many French ecclesiastics. The king asked if, when speaking with the nuncius, he called the pope his Holiness, as by so doing he would greatly offend God, in whom alone was holiness. Rosny replied that he commonly used the style prevalent at court, governing himself according to the rules adopted in regard to pretenders to crowns and kingdoms which they thought belonged to them, but the possession of which was in other hands, conceding to them, in order not to offend them, the titles which they claimed.[60]

James shook his head portentously, and changed the subject.

The general tone of the royal conversation was agreeable enough to the ambassador, who eagerly alluded to the perfidious conduct of a Government which, ever since concluding the peace of Vervins with Henry, had been doing its best to promote sedition and territorial dismemberment in his kingdom, and to assist all his open and his secret enemies.

James assented very emphatically, and the marquis felt convinced that a resentment against Spain, expressed so publicly and so violently by James, could hardly fail to be sincere. He began seriously to hope that his negotiations would be successful, and was for soaring at once into the

[60] Despatches of Rosny, in Vitt. Siri, i. 231.

regions of high politics, when the king suddenly began to talk of hunting.

"And so you sent half the stag I sent you to Count Arenberg," said James; "but he is very angry about it, thinking that you did so to show how much more I make of you than I do of him. And so I do; for I know the difference between your king, my brother, and his masters who have sent me an ambassador who can neither walk nor talk, and who asked me to give him audience in a garden because he cannot go upstairs."[61]

The king then alluded to Tassis, chief courier of his Catholic Majesty and special envoy from Spain, asking whether the marquis had seen him on his passage through France.

"Spain sends me a postillion-ambassador," said he, "that he may travel the faster and attend to business by post."[62]

It was obvious that James took a sincere satisfaction in abusing everything relating to that country from its sovereign and the Duke of Lerma downwards;[63] but he knew very well that Velasco, constable of Castile, had been already designated as ambassador, and would soon be on his way to England.

De Rosny on the termination of his audience was escorted in great state by the Earl of Northumberland to the barges.

A few days later, the ambassador had another private audience, in which the king expressed himself with apparent candour concerning the balance of power.[64] 22 June. Christendom, in his opinion, should belong in three equal shares to the families of Stuart, Bourbon, and Habsburg; but personal ambition and the force of events had given to the house of Austria more than its fair third. Sound policy therefore required a combination between France and England, in order to reduce their copartner within proper limits. This was satisfactory as far as it went, and the ambassador complimented the king on his wide views of policy and his lofty sentiments in regard to human rights.

[61] Sully, Mémoires, iv. 331, *segg.* Despatches of Rosny, in Vitt. Siri, i.

[62] Mémoires, *ubi sup.*

[63] See especially the despatches of the ambassador to the king in the month of July, in Vittorio Siri, Mem. Rec. i.

[64] Mémoires, 355, *segg.*

Warming with the subject, James held language very similar to that which De Rosny and his master had used in their secret conferences, and took the ground unequivocally that the secret war levied by Spain against France and England, as exemplified in the Biron conspiracy, the assault on Geneva, the aid of the Duke of Savoy, and in the perpetual fostering of Jesuit intrigues, plots of assassination, and other conspiracies in the British islands, justified a secret war on the part of Henry and himself against Philip.

The ambassador would have been more deeply impressed with the royal language had he felt more confidence in the royal character.

Highly applauding the sentiments expressed, and desiring to excite still further the resentment of James against Spain, he painted a vivid picture of the progress of that aggressive power in the past century. She had devoured Flanders, Burgundy, Granada, Navarre, Portugal, the German Empire, Milan, Naples, and all the Indies. If she had not swallowed likewise both France and England those two crowns were indebted for their preservation, after the firmness of Elizabeth and Henry, to the *fortunate incident of the revolt of the Netherlands.*[65]

De Rosny then proceeded to expound the necessity under which James would soon find himself of carrying on open war with Spain, and of the expediency of making preparations for the great struggle without loss of time.

He therefore begged the king to concert with him some satisfactory measure for the preservation of the United Provinces.

"But," said James, "what better assistance could we give

[65] Mémoires, 359. And in thus speaking he expressed the firm conviction of the whole French court. "Provided the States remain at war," said Villeroy, "and the Spaniards have this bone to gnaw, it will always be in the power of the English to change their minds. If Spain could get this thorn out of her foot which God has put there, and thus far has kept there so miraculously, with what bridle could her insolence be checked? The kingdoms of France and England being filled with discords in regard to religion as they are, how can they resist Spanish power and Spanish corruption? Even now they can hardly do it, occupied, diverted, and wearied as are the Spaniards with their war against the Netherlands." Groen v Prinsterer, Archives, II. 231, 232.

the Netherlanders than to divide their territory between the States and Spain; agreeing at the same time to drive the Spaniard out altogether, if he violates the conditions which we should guarantee."[66]

This conclusion was not very satisfactory to De Rosny, who saw in the bold language of the king—followed thus by the indication of a policy that might last to the Greek Kalends, and permit Ostend, Dutch Flanders, and even the republic to fall—nothing but that mixture of timidity, conceit, and procrastination which marked the royal character. He pointed out to him accordingly that Spanish statesmanship could beat the world in the art of delay, and of plucking the fruits of delay, and that when the United Provinces had been once subjugated, the turn of England would come. It would be then too late for him to hope to preserve himself by such measures as, taken now, would be most salutary.[67]

A few days later the king invited De Rosny and the two hundred members of his embassy to dine at Greenwich, and the excursion down the Thames took place with the usual pomp.

The two hundred dined with the gentlemen of the court; while at the king's table, on an elevated platform in the same hall, were no guests but De Rosny, and the special envoy of France, Count Beaumont. 29 June.

The furniture and decorations of the table were sumptuous, and the attendants, to the surprise of the Frenchmen, went on their knees whenever they offered wine or dishes to the king. The conversation at first was on general topics, such as the heat of the weather, which happened to be remarkable,

[66] Mémoires, iv. 404, *seqq.* Siri, *ubi sup.*

[67] Mémoires, *ubi sup.* 363. "In truth," wrote the ambassador to his sovereign, "Spain wishes to honey you both (the kings of France and England) in order to accomplish more easily the complete conquest of the Netherlands. When these are joined to her great and almost infinite power, she hopes to give the law to Christendom, to make herself formidable to all other princes, and to establish a universal monarchy. That is the bottom of their intentions. It is the regular covetousness and ambition of Spain, continued by the successors of Charles V. The two houses of Austria and of Spain being united, she has reached such an increase of power in less than one hundred years that the very imagination of it is terrific."—Sully to the King, in Groen v. Prinsterer, ii. 204, 205.

the pleasures of the chase, and the merits of the sermon which, as it was Sunday, De Rosny had been invited to hear before dinner in the royal chapel.

Soon afterwards, however, some allusion being made to the late queen, James spoke of her with contempt. He went so far as to say that, for a long time before her death, he had governed the councils of England; all her ministers obeying and serving him much better than they did herself.[68] He then called for wine, and, stretching out his glass towards his two guests, drank to the health of the king and queen and royal family of France.

De Rosny replied by proposing the health of his august host, not forgetting the queen and their children, upon which the king, putting his lips close to the ambassador's ear, remarked that his next toast should be in honour of the matrimonial union which was proposed between the families of Britain and France.[69]

This was the first allusion made by James to the alliance, and the occasion did not strike the marquis as particularly appropriate to such a topic. He however replied in a whisper that he was rejoiced to hear this language from the king, having always believed that there would be no hesitation on his part between King Henry and the monarch of Spain, who, as he was aware, had made a similar proposition. James, expressing surprise that his guest was so well informed, avowed that he had in fact received the same offer of the Infanta for his son as had been made to his Christian Majesty for the Dauphin. What more convenient counters in the great game of state than an infant prince and princess in each of the three royal families to which Europe belonged! To how many grave political combinations were these unfortunate infants to give rise, and how distant the period when great nations might no longer be tied to the pinafores of children in the nursery!

After this little confidential interlude, James expressed in a loud voice, so that all might hear, his determination never

[68] Mémoires, iv. 378. [69] Ibid.

to permit the subjugation of the Netherlands by Spain. Measures should be taken the very next day, he promised, in concert with the ambassador, as to the aid to be given to the States. Upon the faith of this declaration De Rosny took from his pocket the plan of a treaty, and forthwith, in the presence of all the ministers, placed it in the hands of the king, who meantime had risen from table. The ambassador also took this occasion to speak publicly of the English piracies upon French commerce while the two nations were at peace. The king, in reply, expressed his dissatisfaction at these depredations and at the English admiral who attempted to defend what had been done.

He then took leave of his guests, and went off to bed, where it was his custom to pass his afternoons.[70]

It was certain that the Constable of Castile was now to arrive very soon, and the marquis had, meantime, obtained information on which he relied, that this ambassador would come charged with very advantageous offers to the English court. Accounts had been got ready in council, of all the moneys due to England by France and by the States, and it was thought that these sums, payment of which was to be at once insisted upon, together with the Spanish dollars set afloat in London, would prove sufficient to buy up all resistance to the Spanish alliance.[71]

Such being the nature of the information furnished to De Rosny, he did not look forward with very high hopes to the issue of the conference indicated by King James at the Greenwich dinner. As, after all, he would have to deal once more with Cecil, the master-spirit of the Spanish party, it did not seem very probable that the king's whispered professions of affection for France, his very loud denunciations of Spanish ambition, and his promises of support to the struggling provinces, would be brought into any substantial form for human nourishment. Whispers and big words, touching of glasses at splendid banquets, and proposing of royal toasts, would not

[70] Mémoires, iv. 380.
[71] Ibid. 375, 376. Despatches of Rosny, in Siri.

go far to help those soldiers in Ostend, a few miles away, fighting two years long already for a square half-mile of barren sand, in which seemed centred the world's hopes of freedom.

Barneveld was inclined to take an even more gloomy view than that entertained by the French ambassador. He had, in truth, no reason to be sanguine. The honest republican envoys had brought no babies to offer in marriage. Their little commonwealth had only the merit of exchanging buffets forty years long with a power which, after subjugating the Netherlands, would have liked to annihilate France and England too, and which, during that period, had done its best to destroy and dismember both. It had only struggled as no nation in the world's history had ever done, for the great principle upon which the power and happiness of England were ever to depend. It was therefore not to be expected that its representatives should be received with the distinction conferred upon royal envoys. Barneveld and his colleagues accordingly were not invited, with two hundred noble hangers-on, to come down the Thames in gorgeous array, and dine at Greenwich palace; but they were permitted to mix in the gaping crowd of spectators, to see the fine folk, and to hear a few words at a distance which fell from august lips.[72] This was not very satisfactory, as Barneveld could rarely gain admittance to James or his ministers. De Rosny, however, was always glad to confer with him, and was certainly capable of rendering justice both to his genius and to the sacredness of his cause. The Advocate, in a long conference with the ambassador, thought it politic to paint the situation of the republic in even more sombre colours than seemed to De Rosny justifiable. He was, indeed, the more struck with Barneveld's present despondency, because, at a previous conference, a few days before, he had spoken almost with contempt of the Spaniards, expressing the opinion that the mutinous and disorganized condition of the archduke's army rendered the conquest of Ostend improbable, and hinted at a plan, of which the world as yet

[72] Mémoires, iv. 327.

knew nothing, which would save that place, or at any rate would secure such an advantage for the States as to more than counterbalance its possible loss.[73] This very sanguine demeanour had rather puzzled those who had conferred with the Advocate, although they were ere long destined to understand his allusions, and it was certainly a contrast to his present gloom. He assured De Rosny that the Hollanders were becoming desperate, and that they were capable of abandoning their country in mass, and seeking an asylum beyond the seas.[74] The menace was borrowed from the famous project conceived by William the Silent in darker days, and seemed to the ambassador a present anachronism. Obviously it was thought desirable to force the French policy to extreme lengths, and Barneveld accordingly proposed that Henry should take the burthen upon his shoulders of an open war with Spain, in the almost certain event that England would make peace with that power. De Rosny calmly intimated to the Advocate that this was asking something entirely beyond his power to grant, as the special object of his mission was to form a plan of concerted action with England.[75]

The cautionary towns being next mentioned, Barneveld stated that a demand had been made upon Envoy Caron by Cecil for the delivery of those places to the English Government, as England had resolved to make peace with Spain. The Advocate confided, however, to De Rosny that the States would interpose many difficulties, and that it would

[73] Mémoires, iv. 344, 345.

[74] Ibid. 381.

[75] The great object of Henry was to prevent a treaty between the kings of Spain and Britain, and above all to exclude the United Provinces from any such arrangement. "You know how much interest I have in this," he said to his ambassador; "it is the most important affair of my reign. You must never forget what my interest requires, that these two kings shall never come to an agreement. I don't wish the States to enter into the treaty or to lay down their arms on any pretext. Nevertheless, I ought not to appear to have any wish to prevent a peace between the two kingdoms, nor the reconciliation of the provinces, both on account of my reputation and because any demonstration that I might make would rather increase than diminish the desire of the two kings to come to an understanding."—(Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, II. 224–226). These being the secret intentions of the monarch, candidly expressed, it was obviously a delicate matter for De Rosny, who knew that his master meant to remain at peace and yet reap the advantage of a successful war at the expense of his friends and enemies alike, to keep on good terms with all parties.

be long before the towns were delivered. This important information was given under the seal of strictest secrecy, and was coupled with an inference that a war between the republic and Britain would be the probable result, in which case the States relied upon the alliance with France. The ambassador replied that in this untoward event the republic would have the sympathy of his royal master, but that it would be out of the question for him to go to war with Spain and England at the same time.[76]

On the same afternoon there was a conference at Arundel House between the Dutch deputies, the English counsellors, and De Rosny, when Barneveld drew a most dismal picture of the situation; taking the ground that now or never was the time for driving the Spaniards entirely out of the Netherlands. Cecil said in a general way that his Majesty felt a deep interest in the cause of the provinces, and the French ambassador summoned the Advocate, now that he was assured of the sympathy of two great kings, to furnish some plan by which that sympathy might be turned to account. Barneveld, thinking figures more eloquent than rhetoric, replied that the States, besides garrisons, had fifteen thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry in the field, and fifty war ships in commission, with artillery and munitions in proportion, and that it would be advisable for France and England to furnish an equal force, military and naval, to the common cause.[77]

De Rosny smiled at the extravagance of the proposition. Cecil, again taking refuge in commonplaces, observed that his master was disposed to keep the peace with all his neighbours, but that, having due regard to the circumstances, he was willing to draw a line between the wishes of the States and his own, and would grant them a certain amount of succour underhand.

Thereupon the Dutch deputies withdrew to confer. De Rosny, who had no faith in Cecil's sincerity—the suggestion being essentially the one which he had himself desired—went

[76] Mémoires, iv. 383 [77] Ibid. 383–395.

meantime a little deeper into the subject, and soon found that England, according to the Secretary of State, had no idea of ruining herself for the sake of the provinces, or of entering into any positive engagements in their behalf. In case Spain should make a direct attack upon the two kings who were to constitute themselves protectors of Dutch liberty, it might be necessary to take up arms. The admission was on the whole superfluous, it not being probable that Britain, even under a Stuart, would be converted to the doctrine of non-resistance. Yet in this case it was suggested by Cecil that the chief reliance of his Government would be on the debts owed by the Dutch and French respectively, which would then be forthwith collected.

De Rosny was now convinced that Cecil was trifling with him, and evidently intending to break off all practical negotiations. He concealed his annoyance, however, as well as he could, and simply intimated that the first business of importance was to arrange for the relief of Ostend; that eventualities, such as the possible attack by Spain upon France and England, might for the moment be deferred, but that if England thought it a safe policy to ruin Henry by throwing on his shoulders the whole burthen of a war with the common enemy, she would discover and deeply regret her fatal mistake. The time was a very ill-chosen one to summon France to pay old debts, and his Christian Majesty had given his ambassador no instructions contemplating such a liquidation. It was the intention to discharge the sum annually, little by little, but if England desired to exhaust the king by these peremptory demands, it was an odious conduct, and very different from any that France had ever pursued.

The English counsellors were not abashed by this rebuke, but became, on the contrary, very indignant, avowing that if anything more was demanded of them, England would entirely abandon the United Provinces. "Cecil made himself known to me in this conference," said De Rosny, "for exactly what he was. He made use only of double meanings and vague propositions, feeling that reason was not on his

side. He was forced to blush at his own self-contradictions, when, with a single word, I made him feel the absurdity of his language. Now, endeavouring to intimidate me, he exaggerated the strength of England, and again he enlarged upon the pretended offers made by Spain to that nation."[78]

The secretary, desirous to sow discord between the Dutch deputies and the ambassador, then observed that France ought to pay to England £50,000 upon the nail, which sum would be at once appropriated to the necessities of the States. "But what most enraged me," said De Rosny, "was to see these ministers, who had come to me to state the intentions of their king, thus impudently substitute their own; for I knew that he had commanded them to do the very contrary to that which they did."[79]

The conference ended with a suggestion by Cecil, that as France would only undertake a war in conjunction with England, and as England would only consent to this if paid by France and the States, the best thing for the two kings to do would be to do nothing, but to continue to live in friendship together, without troubling themselves about foreign complications.

This was the purpose towards which the English counsellors had been steadily tending, and these last words of Cecil seemed to the ambassador the only sincere ones spoken by him in the whole conference.

"If I kept silence," said the ambassador, "it was not because I acquiesced in their reasoning. On the contrary, the manner in which they had just revealed themselves, and avowed themselves in a certain sort liars and impostors, had given me the most profound contempt for them. I thought, however, that by heating myself and contending with them—so far from causing them to abandon a resolution which they had taken in concert—I might even bring about a total rupture. On the other hand, matters remaining as they were, and a friendship existing between the two kings, which might perhaps be cemented by a double marriage, a more

[78] Mémoires, iv. 391. [79] Ibid. 392, 393.

favourable occasion might present itself for negotiation. I did not yet despair of the success of my mission, because I believed that the king had no part in the designs which his counsellors wished to carry out." [80]

That the counsellors, then struggling for dominion over the new king and his kingdom, understood the character of their sovereign better than did the ambassador, future events were likely enough to prove. That they preferred peace to war, and the friendship of Spain to an alliance, offensive and defensive, with France in favour of a republic which they detested, is certain. It is difficult, however, to understand why they were "liars and impostors" because, in a conference with the respresentative of France, they endeavoured to make their own opinions of public policy valid rather than content themselves simply with being the errand-bearers of the new king, whom they believed incapable of being stirred to an honourable action.

The whole political atmosphere of Europe was mephitic with falsehood, and certainly the gales which blew from the English court at the accession of James were not fragrant, but De Rosny had himself come over from France under false pretences. He had been charged by his master to represent Henry's childish scheme, which he thought so gigantic, for the regeneration of Europe, as a project of his own, which he was determined to bring to execution, even at the risk of infidelity to his sovereign, and the first element in that whole policy was to carry on war underhand against a power with which his master had just sworn to preserve peace. In that age at least it was not safe for politicians to call each other hard names.

The very next day De Rosny had a long private interview with James at Greenwich. Being urged to speak without reserve, the ambassador depicted the privy counsellors to the king as false to his instructions, traitors to the best interests of their country, the humble servants of Spain, and most desirous to make their royal master the slave of that power

[80] Mémoires, 394, 395.

under the name of its ally. He expressed the opinion, accordingly, that James would do better in obeying only the promptings of his own superior wisdom, rather than the suggestions of the intriguers about him. The adroit De Rosny thus softly insinuated to the flattered monarch that the designs of France were the fresh emanations of his own royal intellect. It was the whim of James to imagine himself extremely like Henry of Bourbon in character, and he affected to take the wittiest, bravest, most adventurous, and most adroit knight-errant that ever won and wore a crown as his perpetual model.

It was delightful, therefore, to find himself, in company with his royal brother, making and unmaking kings, destroying empires, altering the whole face of Christendom, and, better than all, settling then and for ever the theology of the whole world, without the trouble of moving from his easy chair, or of incurring any personal danger.

He entered at once, with the natural tendency to suspicion of a timid man, into the views presented by De Rosny as to the perfidy of his counsellors. He changed colour, and was visibly moved, as the ambassador gave his version of the recent conference with Cecil and the other ministers, and being thus artfully stimulated, he was prepared to receive with much eagerness the portentous communications now to be made.

The ambassador, however, caused him to season his admiration until he had taken a most solemn oath, by the sacrament of the Eucharist, never to reveal a syllable of what he was about to hear. This done, and the royal curiosity excited almost beyond endurance, De Rosny began to unfold the stupendous schemes which had been concerted between Elizabeth and Henry at Dover, and which formed the secret object of his present embassy. Feeling that the king was most malleable in the theological part of his structure, the wily envoy struck his first blows in that direction, telling him that his own interest in the religious condition of Europe, and especially in the firm establishment of the Protestant faith,

far surpassed in his mind all considerations of fortune, country, or even of fidelity to his sovereign.[81] Thus far, political considerations had kept Henry from joining in the great Catholic League, but it was possible that a change might occur in his system, and the Protestant form of worship, abandoned by its ancient protector, might disappear entirely from France and from Europe. De Rosny had, therefore, felt the necessity of a new patron for the reformed religion in this great emergency, and had naturally fixed his eyes on the puissant and sagacious prince who now occupied the British throne. Now was the time, he urged, for James to immortalize his name by becoming the arbiter of the destiny of Europe. It would always seem his own design, although Henry was equally interested in it with himself. The plan was vast but simple, and perfectly easy of execution. There would be no difficulty in constructing an all-powerful league of sovereigns for the destruction of the house of Austria, the foundation-stones of which would of course be France, Great Britain, and the United Provinces. The double marriage between the Bourbon and Stuart families would indissolubly unite the two kingdoms, while interest and gratitude, a common hatred and a common love, would bind the republic as firmly to the union. Denmark and Sweden were certainly to be relied upon, as well as all other Protestant princes. The ambitious and restless Duke of Savoy would be gained by the offer of Lombardy and a kingly crown, notwithstanding his matrimonial connection with Spain. As for the German princes, they would come greedily into the arrangement, as the league, rich in the spoils of the Austrian house, would have Hungary, Bohemia, Silesia, Moravia, the archduchies, and other splendid provinces to divide among them.

The pope would be bought up by a present, in fee-simple, of Naples, and other comfortable bits of property, of which he was now only feudal lord. Sicily would be an excellent sop for the haughty republic of Venice. The Franche Comté, Alsace, Tirol, were naturally to be annexed to Switzerland;

[81] Mémoires, iv. 402.

Liège and the heritage of the Duke of Clèves and Juliers to the Dutch commonwealth.[82]

The King of France, who, according to De Rosny's solemn assertions, was entirely ignorant of the whole scheme,[83] would, however, be sure to embrace it very heartily when James should propose it to him, and would be far too disinterested to wish to keep any of the booty for himself. A similar self-denial was, of course, expected of James, the two great kings satisfying themselves with the proud consciousness of having saved society, rescued the world from the sceptre of an Austrian universal monarchy, and regenerated European civilization for all future time.[84]

The monarch listened with ravished ears, interposed here and there a question or a doubt, but devoured every detail of the scheme, as the ambassador slowly placed it before him.

De Rosny showed that the Spanish faction was not in reality so powerful as the league which would be constructed for its overthrow. It was not so much a religious as a political frontier which separated the nations. He undertook to prove this, but, after all, was obliged to demonstrate that the defection of Henry from the Protestant cause had deprived him of his natural allies, and given him no true friends in exchange for the old ones.

Essentially the Catholics were ranged upon one side, and the Protestants on the other, but both religions were necessary to Henry the Huguenot. The bold free-thinker adroitly balanced himself upon each creed. In making use of a stern and conscientious Calvinist, like Maximilian de Béthune, in his first assault upon the theological professor who now stood in Elizabeth's place, he showed the exquisite tact which never failed him. Toleration for the two religions which had political power, perfect intolerance for all others ; despotic forms of polity, except for two little republics which were to be smothered with protection and never left out of leading strings, a thorough recasting of governments and races, a palingenesis of Europe, a nominal partition of its hegemony between

[82] Mémoires, iv. 204. [83] Ibid. [84] Ibid. 404, *seqq.*

France and England, which was to be in reality absorbed by France, and the annihilation of Austrian power east and west, these were the vast ideas with which that teeming Bourbon brain was filled. It is the instinct both of poetic and of servile minds to associate a sentiment of grandeur with such fantastic dreams, but usually on condition that the dreamer wears a crown. When the regenerator of society appears with a wisp of straw upon his head, unappreciative society is apt to send him back to his cell. There, at least, his capacity for mischief is limited.

If to do be as grand as to imagine what it were good to do, then the Dutchmen in Hell's Mouth and the Porcupine fighting Universal Monarchy inch by inch and pike to pike, or trying conclusions with the ice-bears of Nova Zembla, or capturing whole Portuguese fleets in the Moluccas, were effecting as great changes in the world, and doing perhaps as much for the advancement of civilization, as James of the two Britains and Henry of France and Navarre in those his less heroic days, were likely to accomplish. History has long known the results.

The ambassador did his work admirably. The king embraced him in a transport of enthusiasm, vowed by all that was most sacred to accept the project in all its details, and exacted from the ambassador in his turn an oath on the Eucharist never to reveal, except to his master, the mighty secrets of their conference.[85]

The interview had lasted four hours. When it was concluded, James summoned Cecil, and in presence of the ambassador and of some of the counsellors, lectured him soundly on his presumption in disobeying the royal commands in his recent negotiations with De Rosny. He then announced his decision to ally himself strictly with France against Spain in consequence of the revelations just made to him, and of course to espouse the cause of the United Provinces. Telling the crest-fallen Secretary of State to make the proper official communications on the subject to the ambassadors of my

[85] Mémoires, iv. 417, *et seqq.* Despatches in Siri, vol. 1.

lords the States-General,[86]—thus giving the envoys from the republic for the first time that pompous designation,—the king turned once more to the marquis with the exclamation,—"Well, Mr. Ambassador, this time I hope that you are satisfied with me?"[87]

In the few days following De Rosny busied himself in drawing up a plan of a treaty embodying all that had been agreed upon between Henry and himself, and which he had just so faithfully rehearsed to James. He felt now some inconvenience from his own artfulness, and was in a measure caught in his own trap. Had he brought over a treaty in his pocket, James would have signed it on the spot, so eager was he for the regeneration of Europe. It was necessary, however, to continue the comedy a little longer, and the ambassador, having thought it necessary to express many doubts whether his master could be induced to join in the plot, and to approve what was really his own most cherished plan, could now do no more than promise to use all his powers of persuasion unto that end.

The project of a convention, which James swore most solemnly to sign, whether it were sent to him in six weeks or six months, was accordingly rapidly reduced to writing and approved. It embodied, of course, most of the provisions discussed in the last secret interview at Greenwich. The most practical portion of it undoubtedly related to the United Provinces, and to the nature of assistance to be at once afforded to that commonwealth, the only ally of the two kingdoms expressly mentioned in the treaty. England was to furnish troops, the number of which was not specified, and France was to pay for them, partly out of her own funds, partly out of the amount due by her to England. It was, however, understood, that this secret assistance should not be considered to infringe the treaty of peace which already existed between Henry and the Catholic king. Due and detailed arrangements were made as to the manner in which the allies were to assist each other, in case Spain, not re-

[86] Mémoires, iv, 420. [87] Ibid.

lishing this kind of neutrality, should think proper openly to attack either great Britain or France, or both.[88]

Unquestionably the Dutch republic was the only portion of Europe likely to be substantially affected by these secret arrangements ; for, after all, it had not been found very easy to embody the splendid visions of Henry, which had so dazzled the imagination of James in the dry clauses of a protocol.

It was also characteristic enough of the crowned conspirators, that the clause relating to the United Provinces provided that the allies would *either* assist them in the attainment of their independence, *or*[89]—if it should be considered expedient to restore them to the domination of Spain or the empire—would take such precautions and lay down such conditions as would procure perfect tranquillity for them, and remove from the two allied kings the fear of a too absolute government by the house of Austria in those provinces.

It would be difficult to imagine a more impotent conclusion. Those Dutch rebels had not been fighting for tranquillity. The tranquillity of the rock amid raging waves—according to the device of the father of the republic—they had indeed maintained ; but to exchange their turbulent and tragic existence, ever illumined by the great hope of freedom, for repose under one despot guaranteed to them by two others, was certainly not their aim. They lacked the breadth of vision enjoyed by the regenerators who sat upon mountain-tops.

They were fain to toil on in their own way. Perhaps, however, the future might show as large results from their work as from the schemes of those who were to begin the humiliation of the Austrian house by converting its ancient rebels into tranquil subjects.

The Marquis of Rosny, having distributed 60,000 crowns among the leading politicians and distinguished personages at the English court, with ample promises of future largess if they remained true to his master,[90] took an affec-

[88] Sully, Mémoires, v. 1–12.
[89] Ibid, 7, 8.
[90] Ibid, 20, 35, 40. "L'objet du roy en faisant tant de riches présens dont même une bonne partie fut continuée aux seigneurs Anglais en forme

tionate farewell of King James, and returned with his noble two hundred to recount his triumphs to the impatient Henry. The treaty was soon afterwards duly signed and ratified by the high contracting parties. It was, however, for future history to register its results on the fate of pope, emperor, kings, potentates, and commonwealths, and to show the changes it would work in the geography, religion, and polity of the world.[91]

The deputies from the States-General, satisfied with the practical assistance promised them, soon afterwards took their departure with comparative cheerfulness, having previously obtained the royal consent to raise recruits in Scotland. Meantime the great Constable of Castile, ambassador from his Catholic Majesty, had arrived in London, and was wroth at all that he saw and all that he suspected. He, too, began to scatter golden arguments with a lavish hand among the great lords and statesmen of Britain,[92] but found that the financier of France had, on the whole, got before him in the business, and was skilfully maintaining his precedence from the other side of the channel.

But the end of these great diplomatic manœuvres had not yet come.

de pension, étoit de les retenir et de les attacher de plus en plus à son parti. Je les fis sur ma propre connaissance et sur les recommandations de Beaumont, et ma principale attention fut de les distribuer de maniere qu'ils ne fissent naître aucune jalousie entre ces seigneurs Anglois et que le roy lui même n'en prît aucun soupçon," &c. &c.

[91] "Il multiplia le nombre de ses créatures parcequ'il fit des liberalités extraordinaires à tous ceux dont il crut avoir besoin, &c. &c. Ibid. 35

[92] Et pour user de toutes sortes de contre-batteries contre les Espagnols qui faisoient des présens à toutes mains, on en fit aussi et même des pensions à tout ce qu'il y avoit d'Anglois distingués à la cour du Roi Jacques . . . . . c'est ainsi que l'Espagne se vit frustrée des brillantes esperances qu'elle avoit conçues contre nous de l'avènement du Roy d'Ecosse à la couronne d'Angleterre et qui etoit peut-etre le motif des armamens immenses qu'elle fit cette année." Ibid. 40.

CHAPTER XLII.

Siege of Ostend — The Marquis Spinola made commander-in-chief of the besieging army—Discontent of the troops — General aspect of the operations — Gradual encroachment of the enemy.

THE scene again shifts to Ostend. The Spanish cabinet, wearied of the slow progress of the siege, and not entirely satisfied with the generals, now concluded almost without consent of the archdukes, one of the most extraordinary jobs ever made, even in those jobbing days. The Marquis Spinola, elder brother of the ill-fated Frederic, and head of the illustrious Genoese family of that name, undertook to furnish a large sum of money which the wealth of his house and its connection with the great money-lenders of Genoa enabled him to raise, on condition that he should have supreme command of the operations against Ostend and of the foreign armies in the Netherlands.[1] He was not a soldier, but he entered into a contract, by his own personal exertions both on the exchange and in the field, to reduce the city which had now resisted all the efforts of the archduke for more than two years. Certainly this was an experiment not often hazarded in warfare. The defence of Ostend was in the hands of the best and most seasoned fighting-men in Europe. The operations were under the constant supervision of the foremost captain of the age; for Maurice, in consultation with the States-General, received almost daily reports from the garrison, and regularly furnished advice and instructions as to their proceedings. He was moreover ever ready to take the field for a relieving campaign. Nothing was known of Spinola save that he was a high-born and very wealthy patrician who had reached his thirty-fourth

[1] Gallucci, II. lib. xvi. 109–137, 138. Bentivoglio, iii. 519. Grotius, xii. 633, 634. Wagenaar, ix. 162, 163.

year without achieving personal distinction of any kind, and who, during the previous summer, like so many other nobles from all parts of Europe, had thought it worth his while to drawl through a campaign or two in the Low Countries. It was the mode to do this, and it was rather a stigma upon any young man of family not to have been an occasional looker on at that perpetual military game. His brother Frederic, as already narrated, had tried his chance for fame and fortune in the naval service, and had lost his life in the adventure without achieving the one or the other. This was not a happy augury for the head of the family. Frederic had made an indifferent speculation. What could the brother hope by taking the field against Maurice of Nassau and Lewis William and the Baxes and Meetkerkes? Nevertheless the archduke eagerly accepted his services, while the Infanta, fully confident of his success before he had ordered a gun to be fired, protested that if Spinola did not take Ostend nobody would ever take it.[2] There was also, strangely enough, a general feeling through the republican ranks that the long-expected man had come.

Thus a raw volunteer, a man who had never drilled a hundred men, who had never held an officer's commission in any army in the world, became, as by the waving of a wand, a field-marshal and commander-in-chief at a most critical moment in history, in the most conspicuous position in Christendom, and in a great war, now narrowed down to a single spot of earth, on which the eyes of the world were fixed, and the daily accounts from which were longed for with palpitating anxiety. What but failure and disaster could be expected from such astounding policy? Every soldier in the Catholic forces—from grizzled veterans of half a century who had commanded armies and achieved victories when this dainty young Italian was in his cradle, down to the simple musketeer or rider who had been campaigning for his daily bread ever since he could carry a piece or mount a horse—was furious with discontent or outraged pride.

[2] Gallucci, *ubi sup.*

Very naturally too, it was said that the position of the archdukes had become preposterous. It was obvious, notwithstanding the pilgrimages of the Infanta to Our Lady of Hall,[3] to implore not only the fall of Ostend, but the birth of a successor to their sovereignty, that her marriage would for ever remain barren. Spain was already acting upon this theory, it was said, for the contract with Spinola was made, not at Brussels, but at Madrid, and a foreign army of Spaniards and Italians, under the supreme command of a Genoese adventurer, was now to occupy indefinitely that Flanders which had been proclaimed an independent nation, and duly bequeathed by its deceased proprietor to his daughter.

Ambrose Spinola, son of Philip, Marquis of Venafri, and his wife, Polyxena Grimaldi,[4] was not appalled by the murmurs of hardly suppressed anger or public criticism. A handsome, aristocratic personage, with an intellectual, sad, but sympathetic face, fair hair and beard, and imposing but attractive presence—the young volunteer, at the beginning of October, made his first visit of inspection in the lines before Ostend. After studying the situation of affairs very thoroughly, he decided that the operations on the Gullet or eastern side, including Bucquoy's dike, with Pompey Targone's perambulatory castles and floating batteries, were of secondary importance. He doubted the probability of closing up a harbour, now open to the whole world and protected by the fleets of the first naval power of Europe, with wickerwork, sausages, and bridges upon barrels. His attention was at once concentrated on the western side, and he was satisfied that only by hard fighting and steady delving could he hope to master the place. To gain Ostend he would be obliged to devour it piecemeal as he went on.

Whatever else might be said of the new commander-in-chief, it was soon apparent that, although a volunteer and a patrician, he was no milksop. If he had been accustomed all his life to beds of down, he was as ready now to lie in the trenches, with a cannon for his pillow, as the most ironclad

[3] Meteren, 493v°. [4] Gallucci, *ubi sup.*

veteran in the ranks. He seemed to require neither sleep nor food, and his reckless habit of exposing himself to unnecessary danger was the subject of frequent animadversion on the part both of the archdukes and of the Spanish Government.[5]

It was however in his case a wise temerity. The veterans whom he commanded needed no encouragement to daring deeds, but they required conviction as to the valour and zeal of their new commander, and this was afforded them in overflowing measure.

It is difficult to decide, after such a lapse of years, as to how much of the long series of daily details out of which this famous siege was compounded deserves to be recorded. It is not probable that for military history many of the incidents have retained vital importance. The world rang, at the beginning of the operations, with the skill and inventive talent of Targone, Giustiniani, and other Italian engineers, artificers, and pyrotechnists, and there were great expectations conceived of the effects to be produced by their audacious and original devices. But time wore on. Pompey's famous floating battery would not float, his moving monster battery would not move. With the one, the subtle Italian had intended to close up the Gullet to the States' fleets. It was to rest on the bottom at low water at the harbour's mouth, to rise majestically with the flood, and to be ever ready with a formidable broadside of fifty pounders against all comers. But the wild waves and tempests of the North Sea soon swept the ponderous toy into space, before it had fired a gun. The gigantic chariot, on which a moveable fort was constructed, was still more portentous upon paper than the battery. It was directed against that republican work, defending the Gullet, which was called in derision the Spanish Half-moon. It was to be drawn by forty horses, and armed with no man knew how many great guns, with a mast a hundred and fifty feet high in the centre of the fort, up and down which played pulleys raising and lowering a drawbridge long enough to span the Gullet.

It was further provided with anchors, which were to be

[5] Gallucci.

tossed over the parapet of the doomed redoubt, while the assailants, thus grappled to the enemy's work, were to dash over the bridge after having silenced the opposing fire by means of their own peripatetic battery.

Unfortunately for the fame of Pompey, one of his many wheels was crushed on the first attempt to drag the chariot to the scene of anticipated triumph, the whole structure remained embedded in the sand, very much askew ; nor did all the mules and horses that could be harnessed to it ever succeed in removing it an inch out of a position, which was anything but triumphant.[6]

It seemed probable enough therefore that, so far as depended on the operations from the eastern side, the siege of Ostend, which had now lasted two years and three months, might be protracted for two years and three months longer. Indeed, Spinola at once perceived that if the archduke was ever to be put in possession of the place for which he had professed himself ready to wait eighteen years, it would be well to leave Bucquoy and Targone to build dykes and chariots and bury them on the east at their leisure, while more energy was brought to bear upon the line of fortifications of the west than had hitherto been employed. There had been shooting enough, bloodshed enough, suffering enough, but it was amazing to see the slight progress made. The occupation of what were called the external Squares has been described. This constituted the whole result of the twenty-seven months' work.

The town itself—the small and very insignificant kernel which lay enclosed in such a complicated series of wrappings and layers of defences—seemed as far off as if it were suspended in the sky. The old haven or canal, no longer navigable for ships, still served as an admirable moat which the assailants had not yet succeeded in laying entirely dry. It protected the counterscarp, and was itself protected by an exterior series of works, while behind the counterscarp was

[6] Meteren, 496, 497. Gallucci, lib. xvi. xvii. xviii. Bentivoglio, iii. 520-524. Fleming, 432, 433, *et passim*. Grotius, lib xii. xiii.

still another ditch, not so broad nor deep as the canal, but a formidable obstacle even after the counterscarp should be gained. There were nearly fifty forts and redoubts in these lines, of sufficient importance to have names which in those days became household words, not only in the Netherlands, but in Europe; the siege of Ostend being the one military event of Christendom, so long as it lasted. These names are of course as much forgotten now as those of the bastions before Nineveh. A very few of them will suffice to indicate the general aspect of the operations. On the extreme south-west of Ostend had been in peaceful times a polder—the general term to designate a pasture out of which the sea-water had been pumped—and the forts in that quarter were accordingly called by that name, as Polder Half-moon, Polder Ravelin, or great and little Polder Bulwark, as the case might be. Farther on towards the west, the north-west, and the north, and therefore towards the beach, were the West Ravelin, West Bulwark, Moses's Table, the Porcupine, the Hell's Mouth, the old church, and last and most important of all, the Sand Hill. The last-named work was protected by the Porcupine and Hell's Mouth, was the key to the whole series of fortifications, and was connected by a curtain with the old church, which was in the heart of the old town.[7]

Spinola had assumed command in October, but the winter was already closing in with its usual tempests and floods before there had been time for him to produce much effect. It seemed plain enough to the besieged that the object of the enemy would be to work his way through the Polder, and so gradually round to the Porcupine and the Sand Hill. Precisely in what directions his subterraneous passages might be tending, in what particular spot of the thin crust upon which they all stood an explosion might at any moment be expected, it was of course impossible to know. They were sure that the process of mining was steadily progressing, and Maurice sent orders to countermine under every bulwark, and to secretly isolate every bastion, so that it would be

[7] Fleming, Meteren, Bentivoglio, Grotius, *ubi sup.*

necessary for Spinola to make his way, fort by fort, and inch by inch.[8]

Thus they struggled drearily about under ground, friend and foe, often as much bewildered as wanderers in the catacombs. To a dismal winter succeeded a ferocious spring. Both in February and March were westerly storms, such as had not been recorded even on that tempest-swept coast for twenty years, and so much damage was inflicted on the precious Sand Hill and its curtain, that, had the enemy been aware of its plight, it is probable that one determined assault might have put him in possession of the place. But Ostend was in charge of a most watchful governor, Peter van Gieselles, who had succeeded Charles van der Noot at the close of the year 1603.[9] A plain, lantern-jawed, Dutch colonel, with close-cropped hair, a long peaked beard, and an eye that looked as if it had never been shut; always dressed in a shabby old jerkin with tarnished flowers upon it, he took command with a stout but heavy heart, saying that the place should never be surrendered by him, but that he should never live to see the close of the siege.[10] He lost no time in repairing the damages of the tempest, being ready to fight the west wind, the North Sea, and Spinola at any moment, singly or conjoined. He rebuilt the curtain of the Sand Hill, added fresh batteries to the Porcupine and Hell's Mouth, and amused and distracted the enemy with almost daily sorties and feints. His soldiers passed their days and nights up to the knees in mud and sludge and sea-water, but they saw that their commander never spared himself, and having a superfluity of food and drink, owing to the watchful care of the States-General, who sent in fleets laden with provisions faster than they could be consumed, they were cheerful and content.

On the 12th March there was a determined effort to carry the lesser Polder Bulwark. After a fierce and bloody action, the place was taken by storm, and the first success in the game was registered for Spinola. The little fort was crammed full of dead, but such of the defenders 12 March, 1604.

[8] Fleming. Ibid. 418. [10] Ibid.

as survived were at last driven out of it, and forced to take refuge in the next work.[11] Day after day the same bloody business was renewed, a mere monotony of assaults, repulses, sallies, in which hardly an inch of ground was gained on either side, except at the cost of a great pile of corpses. "Men will never know, nor can mortal pen ever describe," said one who saw it all, "the ferocity and the pertinacity of both besiegers and besieged."[12] On the 15th of March, Colonel Catrice, an accomplished Walloon officer of engineers, commanding the approaches against the Polder, was killed.[13] On the 21st March, as Peter Gieselles was taking his scrambling dinner in company with Philip Fleming, there was a report that the enemy was out again in force. A good deal of progress had been made during the previous weeks on the south-west and west, and more was suspected than was actually known. It was felt that the foe was steadily nibbling his way up to the counterscarp. Moreover, such was the emulation among the Germans, Walloons, Italians, and Spaniards for precedence in working across the canal,[14] that a general assault and universal explosion were considered at any instant possible. The governor sent Fleming to see if all was right in the Porcupine, while he himself went to see if a new battery, which he had just established to check the approaches of the enemy towards the Polder Half-moon and Ravelin in a point very near the counterscarp, was doing its duty. Being, as usual, anxious to reconnoitre with his own eyes, he jumped upon the rampart. But there were sharp-shooters in the enemy's trenches, and they were familiar with the governor's rusty old doublet and haggard old face.[15] Hardly had he climbed upon the breastwork when a ball pierced his heart, and he fell dead without a groan.[16] There was a shout of triumph from the outside, while the tidings soon spread sadness through the garrison, for all loved and venerated the man.[17] Philip Fleming, so soon as he learned the heavy news, lost no time

15 March.

21 March.

[11] Fleming, 470, 471. [12] Ibid. [13] Ibid. 473. [14] Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*
[15] Fleming, 479, 480. [16] Ibid. [17] Ibid.

in unavailing regrets, but instantly sent a courier to Prince Maurice ; meantime summoning a council of superior officers, by whom Colonel John van Loon was provisionally appointed commandant.[18]

A stately, handsome man, a good officer, but without extensive experience, he felt himself hardly equal to the immense responsibility of the post, but yielding to the persuasions of his comrades, proceeded to do his best. His first care was to secure the all-important Porcupine, towards which the enemy had been slowly crawling with his galleries and trenches. Four days after he had accepted the command he was anxiously surveying that fortification, and endeavouring to obtain a view of the enemy's works, when a cannon-ball struck him on the right leg, so that he died the next day.[19] Plainly the post of commandant of Ostend was no sinecure. He was temporarily succeeded by Sergeant-Major Jacques de Bievry, but the tumults and confusion incident upon this perpetual change of head were becoming alarming. The enemy gave the garrison no rest night nor day, and it had long become evident that the young volunteer, whose name was so potent on the Genoa Exchange, was not a man of straw nor a dawdler, however the superseded veterans might grumble. At any rate the troops on either side were like to have their fill of work.

25 March, 1604.

On the 2nd April the Polder Ravelin was carried by storm. It was a most bloody action. Never were a few square feet of earth more recklessly assailed, more resolutely maintained. The garrison did not surrender the place, but they all laid down their lives in its defence. Scarcely an individual of them all escaped, and the foe, who paid dearly with heaps of dead and wounded for his prize, confessed that such serious work as this had scarce been known before in any part of that great slaughter-house, Flanders.[20]

2 April.

A few days later, Colonel Bievry, provisional commandant, was desperately wounded in a sortie, and was carried off to

[18] Fleming, 479, 480. [19] Ibid. 487, 492. [20] Ibid. 501, 502.

Zeeland.[21] The States-General now appointed Jacques van der Meer, Baron of Berendrecht, to the post of honour and of danger.[22] A noble of Flanders, always devoted to the republican cause; an experienced middle-aged officer, vigilant, energetic, nervous; a slight wiry man, with a wizened little face, large bright eyes, a meagre yellow beard, and thin sandy hair flowing down upon his well-starched ruff, the new governor soon showed himself inferior to none of his predecessors in audacity and alertness. It is difficult to imagine a more irritating position in many respects than that of commander in such an extraordinary leaguer. It was not a formal siege. Famine, which ever impends over an invested place, and sickens the soul with its nameless horrors, was not the great enemy to contend against here. Nor was there the hideous alternative between starving through obstinate resistance or massacre on submission, which had been the lot of so many Dutch garrisons in the earlier stages of the war. Retreat by sea was ever open to the Ostend garrison, and there was always an ample supply of the best provisions and of all munitions of war. But they had been unceasingly exposed to two tremendous enemies. During each winter and spring the ocean often smote their bastions and bulwarks in an hour of wrath till they fell together like children's toys, and it was always at work, night and day, steadily lapping at the fragile foundations on which all their structures stood. Nor was it easy to give the requisite attention to the devouring sea, because all the materials that could be accumulated seemed necessary to repair the hourly damages inflicted by their other restless foe.

Thus the day seemed to draw gradually but inexorably nearer when the place would be, not captured, but consumed. There was nothing for it, so long as the States were determined to hold the spot, but to meet the besieger at every point, above or below the earth, and sell every inch of that little morsel of space at the highest price that brave men could impose.

[21] Fleming, 505. [22] Ibid. 510.

So Berendrecht, as vigilant and devoted as even Peter Gieselles had ever been, now succeeded to the care of the Polders and the Porcupines, and the Hell's Mouths, and all the other forts, whose quaint designations had served, as usually is the case among soldiers, to amuse the honest patriots in the midst of their toils and danger. On the 18th April the enemy assailed the great western Ravelin, and after a sanguinary hand-to-hand action, in which great numbers of officers and soldiers were lost on both sides, he carried the fort; the Spaniards, Italians, Germans, and Walloons vieing with each other in deeds of extraordinary daring, and overcoming at last the resistance of the garrison.[23] 18 April, 1604.

This was an important success. The foe had now worked his way with galleries and ditches along the whole length of the counterscarp till he was nearly up with the Porcupine, and it was obvious that in a few days he would be master of the counterscarp itself.

A less resolute commander, at the head of less devoted troops, might have felt that when that inevitable event should arrive all that honour demanded would have been done, and that Spinola was entitled to his city. Berendrecht simply decided that if the old counterscarp could no longer be held it was time to build a new counterscarp. This, too, had been for some time the intention of Prince Maurice. A plan for this work had already been sent into the place, and a distinguished English engineer, Ralph Dexter by name, arrived with some able assistants to carry it into execution.[24] It having been estimated that the labour would take three weeks of time, without more ado the inner line was carefully drawn, cutting off with great nicety and precision about one half the whole place. Within this narrowed circle the same obstinate resistance was to be offered as before, and the bastions and redoubts of the new entrenchment were to be baptized with the same uncouth names which two long years of terrible struggle had made so precious. The work was very laborious; for the line was drawn straight through the

[23] Fleming, 515, 516. [24] Ibid. 516–522.

town, and whole streets had to be demolished and the houses to their very foundations shovelled away. Moreover the men were forced to toil with spade in one hand and matchlock in the other, ever ready to ascend from the ancient dilapidated cellars in order to mount the deadly breach at any point in the whole circumference of the place.[25]

It became absolutely necessary therefore to send a sufficient force of common workmen into the town to lighten the labours of the soldiers. Moreover the thought, although whistled to the wind, would repeatedly recur, that, after all, there must be a limit to these operations, and that at last there would remain no longer any earth in which to find a refuge.

The work of the new entrenchment went slowly on, but it was steadily done. Meantime they were comforted by hearing that the stadholder had taken the field in Flanders, at the head of a considerable force, and they lived in daily expectation of relief. It will be necessary, at the proper moment, to indicate the nature of Prince Maurice's operations. For the present, it is better that the reader should confine his attention within the walls of Ostend.

By the 11th May, the enemy had effected a lodgment in a corner of the Porcupine, and already from that point might threaten the new counterscarp before it should be completed. At the same time he had gnawed through to the West Bulwark, and was busily mining under the Porcupine itself. In this fort friend and foe now lay together, packed like herrings, and profited by their proximity to each other to vary the monotony of pike and snaphance with an occasional encounter of epistolary wit.

11 May, 1604.

Thus Spanish letters, tied to sticks, and tossed over into the next entrenchment, were replied to by others, composed in four languages by the literary man of Ostend, Auditor Fleming, and shot into the enemy's trenches on cross-bow bolts.[26]

On the 29th May, a long prepared mine was sprung beneath the Porcupine. It did its work effectively, and the assailants did theirs no less admirably, crowding into

29 May.

[25] Fleming, 516–522.

[26] Ibid. 528, *seqq.*

the breach with headlong ferocity, and after a long and sanguinary struggle with immense loss on both sides, carrying the precious and long-coveted work by storm.[27] Inch by inch the defenders were thus slowly forced back toward their new entrenchment. On the same day, however, they inflicted a most bloody defeat upon the enemy in an attempt to carry the great Polder. He withdrew, leaving heaps of slain, so that the account current for the day would have balanced itself, but that the Porcupine, having changed hands, now bristled most formidably against its ancient masters.[28] The daily slaughter had become sickening to behold. There were three thousand effective men in the garrison. More could have been sent in to supply the steady depletion in the ranks, but there was no room for more. There was scarce space enough for the living to stand to their work, or for the dead to lie in their graves. And this was an advantage which could not fail to tell. Of necessity the besiegers would always very far outnumber the garrison, so that the final success of their repeated assaults became daily more and more possible.

Yet on the 2nd June the enemy met not only with another signal defeat, but also with a most bitter surprise. On that day the mine which he had been so long and so laboriously constructing beneath the great Polder Bulwark was sprung with magnificent effect. A breach, forty feet wide, was made in this last stronghold of the old defences, and the soldiers leaped into the crater almost before it had ceased to blaze, expecting by one decisive storm to make themselves masters at last of all the fortifications, and therefore of the town itself. But as, emerging from the mine, they sprang exulting upon the shattered bulwark, a transformation more like a sudden change in some holiday pantomime than a new fact in this three years' most tragic siege presented itself to their astonished eyes. They had carried the last defence of the old counterscarp, and behold—a new one, which they had never dreamed of, bristling before

2 June.

[27] Fleming, 538. [28] Ibid.

their eyes, with a flanking battery turned directly upon them.[29] The musketeers and pikemen, protected by their new works, now thronged towards the assailants ; giving them so hearty a welcome that they reeled back, discomfited, after a brief but severe struggle, from the spot of their anticipated triumph, leaving their dead and dying in the breach.[30]

Four days later, Berendrecht, with a picked party of English troops, stole out for a reconnaissance, not wishing to trust other eyes than his own in the imminent peril of the place.

6 June.

The expedition was successful. A few prisoners were taken, and valuable information was obtained, but these advantages were counterbalanced by a severe disaster. The vigilant and devoted little governor, before effecting his entrance into the sally port, was picked off by a sharpshooter, and died the next day.[31] This seemed the necessary fate of the commandants of Ostend, where the operations seemed more like a pitched battle lasting three years than an ordinary siege. Gieselles, Van Loon, Bievry, and now Berendrecht, had successively fallen at the post of duty since the beginning of the year. Not one of them was more sincerely deplored than Berendrecht. His place was supplied by Colonel Uytenhoove, a stalwart, hirsute, hard-fighting Dutchman, the descendant of an ancient race, and seasoned in many a hard campaign.

The enemy now being occupied in escarping and furnishing with batteries the positions he had gained, with the obvious intention of attacking the new counterscarp, it was resolved to prepare for the possible loss of this line of fortifications by establishing another and still narrower one within it.

Half the little place had been shorn away by the first change. Of the half which was still in possession of the besieged about one-third was now set off, and in this little corner of earth, close against the new harbour, was set up their last refuge. They called the new citadel Little Troy, and announced, with pardonable bombast, that they would hold

[29] Fleming, 543. [30] Ibid. [31] Ibid. 546.

out there as long as the ancient Trojans had defended Ilium.[32] With perfect serenity the engineers set about their task with line, rule, and level, measuring out the bulwarks and bastions, the miniature salients, half-moons, and ditches, as neatly and methodically as if there were no ceaseless cannonade in their ears, and as if the workmen were not at every moment summoned to repel assaults upon the outward wall. They sent careful drawings of Little Troy to Maurice and the States, and received every encouragement to persevere, together with promises of ultimate relief.[33]

But there was one serious impediment to the contemplated construction of the new earth-works. They had no earth. Nearly everything solid had been already scooped away in the perpetual delving. The sea-dykes had been robbed of their material, so that the coming winter might find besiegers and besieged all washed together into the German Ocean, and it was hard digging and grubbing among the scanty cellarages of the dilapidated houses. But there were plenty of graves, filled with the results of three years' hard fighting. And now, not only were all the cemeteries within the precincts shovelled and carted in mass to the inner fortifications, but rewards being offered of ten stivers for each dead body, great heaps of disinterred soldiers were piled into the new ramparts.[34] Thus these warriors, after laying down their lives for the cause of freedom, were made to do duty after death. Whether it were just or no thus to disturb the repose —if repose it could be called—of the dead that they might once more protect the living, it can scarcely be doubted that they took ample revenge on the already sufficiently polluted atmosphere.

On the 17th June the foe sprang a mine under the western bulwark, close to a countermine exploded by the garrison the day before. The assailants thronged as merrily as usual to the breach, and were met with customary resolution by the besieged; Governor Uytenhoove, 17 June, 1604.

[32] Haestens, 272. Grotius, xiii. 645. [33] Fleming, 551, *seqq.*
[34] Haestens, 272.

clad in complete armour, leading his troops. The enemy, after an hour's combat, was repulsed with heavy loss, but the governor fell in the midst of the fight.[35] Instantly he was seized by the legs by a party of his own men, some English desperadoes among the number, who, shouting that the colonel was dead, were about to render him the last offices by plundering his body. The ubiquitous Fleming, observing the scene, flew to the rescue and, with the assistance of a few officers, drove off these energetic friends, and taking off the governor's casque, discovered that he still breathed.[36] That he would soon have ceased to do so, had he been dragged much farther in his harness over that jagged and precipitous pile of rubbish, was certain.[37] He was desperately wounded, and of course incapacitated for his post. Thus, in that year, before the summer solstice, a fifth commandant had fallen.

On the same day, simultaneously with this repulse in the West Bulwark, the enemy made himself at last completely master of the Polder. Here, too, was a savage hand-to-hand combat with broadswords and pikes, and when the pikes were broken, with great clubs and stakes pulled from the fascines;[38] but the besiegers were victorious, and the defenders sullenly withdrew with their wounded to the inner entrenchments.

On the 27th June, Daniel de Hartaing, Lord of Marquette, was sent by the States-General to take command in Ostend.[39] The colonel of the Walloon regiment which had rendered such good service on the famous field of Nieuport, the new governor, with his broad, brown, cheerful face, and his Milan armour, was a familiar figure enough to the campaigners on both sides in Flanders or Germany.

27 June.

The stoutest heart might have sunk at the spectacle which the condition of the town presented at his first inspection. The States-General were resolved to hold the place, at all hazards, and Marquette had come to do their bidding, but it was difficult to find anything that could be called a town. The great heaps of rubbish, which had once been the outer walls, were almost entirely in the possession of the foe, who had

[35] Fleming, 555. [36] Ibid. [37] Ibid. [38] Ibid. 556. [39] Ibid. 560.

lodged himself in all that remained of the defiant Porcupine, the Hell's Mouth, and other redoubts, and now pointed from them at least fifty great guns against their inner walls. The old town, with its fortifications, was completely honeycombed, riddled, knocked to pieces, and, although the Sand Hill still held out, it was plain enough that its days were numbered unless help should soon arrive. In truth, it required a clear head and a practised eye to discover among those confused masses of prostrate masonry, piles of brick, upturned graves, and mounds of sand and rubbish, anything like order and regularity. Yet amid the chaos there was really form and meaning to those who could read aright, and Marquette saw, as well in the engineers' lines as in the indomitable spirit that looked out of the grim faces of the garrison, that Ostend, so long as anything of it existed in nature, could be held for the republic. Their brethren had not been firmer, when keeping their merry Christmas, seven years before, under the North Pole, upon a pudding made of the gunner's cartridge paste, or the Knights of the Invincible Lion in the horrid solitudes of Tierra del Fuego, than were the defenders of this sandbank.

Whether the place were worth the cost or not, it was for my lords the States-General to decide, not for Governor Marquette. And the decision of those "high and mighty" magistrates, to whom even Maurice of Nassau bowed without a murmur, although often against his judgment, had been plainly enough announced.

And so shiploads of deals and joists, bricks, nails, and fascines, with all other requisite building materials, were sent daily in from Zeeland,[40] in order that Little Troy might be completed; and, with God's help, said the garrison, the republic shall hold its own.

And now there were two months more of mining and countermining, of assaults and repulses, of cannonading and hand-to-hand fights with pikes and clubs. Nearer and nearer, day by day, and inch by inch, the foe had crawled up to

[40] Fleming.

the verge of their last refuge, and the walls of Little Troy, founded upon fresh earth and dead men's bones, and shifting sands, were beginning to quake under the guns of the inex-
27 August, 1604. orable volunteer from Genoa. Yet on the 27th August there was great rejoicing in the beleaguered town. Cannon thundered salutes, bonfires blazed, trumpets rang jubilant blasts, and, if the church-bells sounded no merry peals, it was because the only church in the place had been cut off in the last slicing away by the engineers. Hymns of thanksgiving ascended to heaven, and the whole garrison fell on their knees, praying fervently to Almighty God, with devout and grateful hearts.[41] It was not an ignoble spectacle to see those veterans kneeling where there was scarce room to kneel, amid ruin and desolation, to praise the Lord for his mercies. But to explain this general thanksgiving it is now necessary for a moment to go back.

[41] Fleming, 572.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Policy of the King of France — Operations of Prince Maurice — Plans for a Flemish Campaign — Passage into Flanders — Fort St. Catharine — Flight of its garrison, and occupation by Maurice — Surrender of Ysendyke and Aardenburg — Skirmish at Stamper's Hook — Siege of Sluys by Prince Maurice — Ineffectual attempt of Spinola to relieve the town — Its capitulation and restoration to the States — Death of Lewis Gunther of Nassau — Operations at Ostend — Surrender of the garrison — Desolation of the scene after its evacuation.

The States-General had begun to forget the severe lesson taught them in the Nieuport campaign. Being determined to hold Ostend, they became very impatient, in the early part of the present year, that Maurice should once more invade Flanders, at the head of a relieving army, and drive the archdukes from before the town.

They were much influenced in this policy by the persistent advice of the French king. To the importunities of their envoy at Paris, Henry had, during the past eighteen months, replied by urging the States to invade Flanders and seize its ports. When they had thus something to place as pledges in his hands, he might accede to their clamour and declare war against Spain. But he scarcely concealed his intention, in such case, to annex both the obedient and the United Netherlands to his own dominions. Meantime, before getting into the saddle, he chose to be guaranteed against loss. "Assure my lords the States that I love them," he said, "and shall always do my best for them."[1] His affection for the territory of my lords was even warmer than the sentiments he entertained for themselves. Moreover, he grudged the preliminary expenses which would be necessary even should he ultimately make himself sovereign of the whole country. Rosny assured the envoy that he was mistaken in expecting a declaration of

[1] Aerssens to Olden-Barneveld, in Van Deventer, ii. 333–335.

war against Spain. "Not that he does not think it useful and necessary," said the minister, "but he wishes to have war and peace both at once—peace because he wishes to make no retrenchments in his pleasures of women, dogs, and buildings, and so war would be very inopportune. In three months he would be obliged to turn tail for want of means (to use his own words), although I would furnish him funds enough, if he would make the use of them that he ought." [2]

The Queen of England, who, with all her parsimony and false pretences, never doubted in her heart that perpetual hostility to Spain was the chief bulwark of her throne, and that the republic was fighting her battles as well as its own, had been ready to make such a lively war in conjunction with France as would drive the Spaniard out of all the Netherlands. But Henry was not to be moved. "I know that if I should take her at her word," said he, "she would at once begin to screw me for money. She has one object, I another." Villeroy had said plainly to Aerssens, in regard to the prevalent system of Englishmen, Spaniards, and Frenchmen being at war with each other, while the Governments might be nominally at peace, "Let us take off our masks. If the Spaniard has designs against our State, has he not cause? He knows the aid we are giving you, and resents it. If we should abstain, he would leave us in peace. If the Queen of England expects to draw us into a league, she is mistaken. Look to yourselves and be on your guard. Richardot is intriguing with Cecil. You give the queen securities, fortresses, seats in your council. The king asks nothing but communication of your projects." [3]

In short, all the comfort that Aerssens had been able to derive from his experiences at the French court in the autumn of 1602, was that the republic could not be too suspicious both of England and France. Rosny especially he considered the most dangerous of all the politicians in France. His daughter was married to the Prince of Espinoy, whose 50,000 livres a year would be safer the more the archduke

[2] Aerssens to Olden-Barneveld, in Van Deventer, ii. 333–335. [3] Ibid.

was strengthened. "But for this he would be stiffer," said Aerssens.[4] Nevertheless there were strong motives at work, pressing France towards the support of the States. There were strong political reasons, therefore, why they should carry the war into Flanders, in conformity with the wishes of the king.

The stadholder, after much argument, yielded as usual to the authority of the magistrates, without being convinced as to the sagacity of their plans. It was arranged that an army should make a descent upon the Flemish coast in the early spring, and make a demonstration upon Sluys. The effect of this movement, it was thought, would be to draw the enemy out of his entrenchments, in which case it would be in the power of Maurice to put an end at once to the siege. It is unquestionable that the better alternative, in the judgment of the prince, was to take possession, if possible, of Sluys itself. His preparations were, however, made with a view to either event, and by the middle of April he had collected at Willemstad a force of fifteen thousand foot and three thousand horse. As on the former memorable expedition, he now again insisted that a considerable deputation of the States and of the States' council should accompany the army.[5] His brother Henry, and his cousins Lewis William, Lewis Gunther, and Ernest Casimir, were likewise with him, as well as the Prince of Anhalt and other distinguished personages.

On the 25th April the army, having crossed the mouth of the West Scheld, from Zeeland, in numberless vessels of all sizes and degrees, effected their debarkation on the island of Cadzand.[6] 25 April.

In the course of two days they had taken possession of the little town, and all the forts of that island, having made their entrance through what was called the Black Channel. Had they steered boldly through the Swint or Sluys channel at once, it is probable that they might have proceeded straight

[4] Aerssens to Olden-Barneveld, in Van Deventer, ii. 333–335.

[5] V. d. Kemp, ii. 109, *seqq.*, and notes.

[6] Bentivoglio, iii. 525–529. Meteren 494, 495. Grotius, xiii. 639–644. Fleming. Haestens.

up to Sluys, and taken the place by surprise. Maurice's habitual caution was, perhaps, on this occasion, a disadvantage to him, but he would have violated the rules of war, and what seemed the dictates of common sense, had he not secured a basis of operations, and a possibility of retreat, before plunging with his army into the heart of a hostile country. The republic still shuddered at the possible catastrophe of four years before, when circumstances had forced him to take the heroic but dangerous resolution of sending off his ships from Nieuport. Before he had completed his arrangements for supplies on the island of Cadzand, he learned from scouts and reconnoitring parties that Spinola had sent a thousand infantry, besides five hundred cavalry, under Trivulzio, to guard the passage across the Swint. Maurice was thus on the wrong side of the great channel by which Sluys communicated with the sea.[7]

The town of Sluys and its situation have been described in a former chapter.[8] As a port, it was in those days considered a commodious and important one, capable of holding five hundred ships. As a town, it was not so insignificant as geographical and historical changes have since made it, and was certainly far superior to Ostend, even if Ostend had not been almost battered out of existence. It had spacious streets and squares, and excellent fortifications in perfectly good condition. It was situate in a watery labyrinth, many slender streams from the interior and several saltwater creeks being complicated around it, and then flowing leisurely, in one deep sluggish channel, to the sea. The wrath of Leicester, when all his efforts to relieve the place had been baffled by the superior skill of Alexander Farnese, has been depicted, and during the seventeen years which had elapsed since its capture, the republic had not ceased to deplore that disaster. Obviously if the present expedition could end in the restoration of Sluys to its rightful owners, it would be a remarkable success, even if Ostend should fall. Sluys and its adjacent domains formed a natural portion of

[7] Fleming, 584–587. [8] Vol. II. chap. xvi.

the Zeeland archipelago, the geographical counterpart of Flushing. With both branches of the stately Scheld in its control, the republic would command the coast, and might even dispense with Ostend, which, in the judgment of Maurice, was an isolated and therefore not a desirable military possession. The States-General were of a different opinion. They much desired to obtain Sluys, but they would not listen to the abandonment of Ostend. It was expected of the stadholder, therefore, that he should seize the one and protect the other. The task was a difficult one. A less mathematical brain than that of Maurice of Nassau would have reeled at the problem to be solved. To master such a plexus of canals, estuaries, and dykes, of passages through swamps, of fords at low water which were obliterated by flood-tide; to take possession of a series of redoubts built on the only firm points of land, with nothing but quaking morass over which to manœuvre troops or plant batteries against them, would be a difficult study, even upon paper. To accomplish it in the presence of a vigilant and anxious foe seemed bewildering enough.

At first it was the intention of the stadholder, disappointed at learning the occupation of the Swint, to content himself with fortifying Cadzand, in view of future operations at some more favourable moment.[9] So meagre a result would certainly not have given great satisfaction to the States, nor added much to the military reputation of Maurice. While he hesitated between plunging without a clue into the watery maze around him, and returning discomfited from the expedition on which such high hopes had been built, a Flemish boor presented himself. He offered to guide the army around the east and south of Sluys, and to point out passages where it would be possible to cross the waters, which, through the care of Spinola, now seemed to forbid access to the place.[10] Maurice lingered no longer. On the 28th April, led by the friendly boor, he advanced towards Oostburg. Next morning a small force of the enemy's infantry and cavalry was seen, showing that there must be foothold in

28 April.

[9] Fleming, 585. [10] Ibid. Grotius, *ubi sup.*

that direction. He sent out a few companies to skirmish with those troops, who fled after a very brief action, and, in flying, showed their pursuers the road. Maurice marched in force, straight through the waters, on the track of the retreating foe. They endeavoured to rally at the fort of Coxie, which stood upon and commanded a dyke, but the republicans were too quick for them, and drove them out of the place.[11] The stadholder, thus obtaining an unexpected passage into Flanders, conceived strong hopes of success, despite the broken nature of the ground. Continuing to feel his way cautiously through the wilderness of quagmire, he soon came upon a very formidable obstacle. The well-built and well-equipped redoubt of St. Catharine rose frowning before him, overshadowing his path, and completely prohibiting all further progress. Plainly it would be necessary to reduce this work at once, unless he were willing to abandon his enterprise. He sent back to Cadzand for artillery, but it was flood-tide, the waters were out, and it was not till late in the afternoon that nine pieces arrived. The stadholder ordered a cannonade, less with the hope of producing an impression by such inadequate means on so strong a work, than with the intention of showing the enemy that he had brought field-guns with him, and was not merely on an accidental foray. At the same time, having learned that the garrison, which was commanded by Trivulzio, was composed of only a few regular troops, and a large force of guerillas, he gave notice that such combatants were not entitled to quarter, and that if captured they would be all put to the sword. The reply to this threat was not evacuation but defiance. Especially a volunteer ensign mounted upon a rampart, and danced about, waving his flag gaily in the face of the assailants. Maurice bitterly remarked to his staff that such a man alone was enough to hold the fort.[12] As it was obvious that the place would require a siege in form, and that it would be almost impossible to establish batteries upon that quaking soil, where there was no dry land

30 April.

1 May.

[11] Grotius, *ubi sup.*

[12] Fleming, 586.

for cavalry or artillery to move, Maurice ordered the nine guns to be carried back to Cadzand that night, betaking himself, much disappointed, in the same direction.[13] Yet it so happened that the cannoneers, floundering through the bogs, made such an outcry—especially when one of their guns became so bemired that it was difficult for them to escape the disgrace of losing it—that the garrison, hearing a great tumult, which they could not understand, fell into one of those panics to which raw and irregular troops are liable.[14] Nothing would convince them that fresh artillery had not arrived, that the terrible stadholder with an immense force was not creating invincible batteries, and that they should be all butchered in cold blood, according to proclamation, before the dawn of day. They therefore evacuated the place under cover of the night, so that this absurd accident absolutely placed Maurice in possession of the very fort—without striking a blow—which he was about to abandon in despair, and which formed the first great obstacle to his advance.[15] 3 May.

Having occupied St. Catharine's, he moved forward to Ysendyke, a strongly fortified place three leagues to the eastward of Sluys, and invested it in form. Meantime a great danger was impending over him. A force of well-disciplined troops, to the number of two thousand, dropped down in boats from Sluys to Cadzand, for the purpose of surprising the force left to guard that important place. The expedition was partially successful. Six hundred landed, beating down all opposition. But a few Scotch companies held firm, and by hard fighting were able at last to drive the invaders back to their sloops, many of which were sunk in the affray, with all on board. The rest ignominiously retreated.[16] Had the enterprise been as well executed as it was safely planned, it would have gone hard with the stadholder and his army. It is difficult to see in what way he could have extricated himself from such a dilemma, being thus cut off from his supplies and his fleet, and therefore from 6 May.

[13] Fleming, 587. [14] Ibid. [15] Ibid. [16] Ibid. 588, Grotius, *ubi sup.*

all possibility of carrying out his design or effecting his escape to Zeeland. Certainly thus far, fortune had favoured his bold adventure.

He now sent his own trumpeter, Master Hans, to summon Ysendyke to a surrender. The answer was a bullet which went through the head of unfortunate Master Hans. Maurice, enraged at this barbarous violation of the laws of war, drew his lines closer. Next day the garrison, numbering six hundred, mostly Italians, capitulated, and gave up the musketeer who had murdered the trumpeter.[17]

10 May.

Two days later the army appeared before Aardenburg, a well-fortified town four miles south of Sluys. It surrendered disgracefully, without striking a blow. The place was a most important position for the investment of Sluys. Four or five miles further towards the west, two nearly parallel streams, both navigable, called the Sweet and the Salt, ran from Dam to Sluys. It was a necessary but most delicate operation, to tie up these two important arteries. An expedition despatched in this direction came upon Trivulzio with a strong force of cavalry, posted at a pass called Stamper's Hook, which controlled the first of these streams. The narrowness of the pathway gave the advantage to the Italian commander. A warm action took place, in which the republican cavalry were worsted, and Paul Bax severely wounded. Maurice coming up with the infantry at a moment when the prospect was very black, turned defeat into victory and completely routed the enemy, who fled from the precious position with a loss of five hundred killed and three hundred prisoners, eleven officers among them.[18] The Sweet was now in the stadholder's possession. Next day he marched against the Salt, at a pass where fourteen hundred Spaniards were stationed. Making very ostentatious preparations for an attack upon this position, he suddenly fell backwards down the stream to a point which he had discovered to be fordable at low water,

12 May.

16 May.

17 May.

[17] Grotius, *ubi sup.*

[18] Ibid. 591, 572. Bentivoglio, iii. 527, 528. Meteren, 494, 495.

and marched his whole army through the stream while the skirmishing was going on a few miles farther up. The Spaniards, discovering their error, and fearing to be cut off, scampered hastily away to Dam. Both streams were now in the control of the republican army, while the single fort of St. Joris was all that was now interposed between Maurice and the much-coveted Swint. This redoubt, armed with nine guns, and provided with a competent garrison, was surrendered on the 23rd May.[19] 23 May.

The Swint, or great sea-channel of Sluys, being now completely in the possession of the stadholder, he deliberately proceeded to lay out his lines, to make his entrenched camp, and to invest his city with the beautiful neatness which ever characterized his sieges. A groan came from the learned Lipsius, as he looked from the orthodox shades of Louvain upon the progress of the heretic prince.

"Would that I were happier," he cried, "but things are not going on in Flanders as I could wish. How easy it would have been to save Sluys, which we are now trying so hard to do, had we turned our attention thither in time! But now we have permitted the enemy to entrench and fortify himself, and we are the less excusable because we know to our cost how felicitously he fights with the spade, and that he builds works like an ancient Roman. . . . . Should we lose Sluys, which God forbid, how much strength and encouragement will be acquired by the foe, and by all who secretly or openly favour him! Our neighbours are all straining their eyes, as from a watch-tower, eager to see the result of all these doings. But what if they too should begin to move? Where should we be? I pray God to have mercy on the Netherlanders, whom He has been so many years chastising with heavy whips."[20]

It was very true. The man with the spade had been allowed to work too long at his felicitous vocation. There had been a successful effort made to introduce reinforcements

[19] Fleming, Bentivo., Met., *ubi sup* Van der Kemp, ii. 110, 111, and notes.
[20] Letter to Heer de Vertering, in Haestens, 285, and Fleming, 289, 290.

to the garrison. Troops, to the number of fifteen hundred, had been added to those already shut up there, but the attempts to send in supplies were not so fortunate. Maurice had completely invested the town before the end of May, having undisputed possession of the harbour and of all the neighbouring country. He was himself encamped on the west side of the Swint; Charles van der Noot lying on the south. The submerged meadows, stretching all around in the vicinity of the haven, he had planted thickly with gunboats. Scarcely a bird or a fish could go into or out of the place. Thus the stadholder exhibited to the Spaniards who, fifteen miles off towards the west, had been pounding and burrowing three years long before Ostend without success, what he understood by a siege.

22 May. On the 22nd of May a day of solemn prayer and fasting was, by command of Maurice, celebrated throughout the besieging camp. In order that the day should be strictly kept in penance, mortification, and thanksgiving, it was ordered, on severe penalties, that neither the commissaries nor sutlers should dispense any food whatever, throughout the twenty-four hours.[21] Thus the commander-in-chief of the republic prepared his troops for the work before them.

29, 30 May, 1604. In the very last days of May the experiment was once more vigorously tried to send in supplies. A thousand galley-slaves, the remnant of Frederic Spinola's unlucky naval forces, whose services were not likely very soon to be required at sea, were sent out into the drowned land, accompanied by five hundred infantry. Simultaneously Count Berlaymont, at the head of four thousand men, conveying a large supply of provisions and munitions, started from Dam. Maurice, apprised of the adventure, sallied forth with two thousand troops to meet them. Near Stamper's Hook he came upon a detachment of Berlaymont's force, routed them, and took a couple of hundred prisoners. Learning from them that Berlaymont himself, with the principal

[21] Fleming, 593.

part of his force, had passed farther on, he started off in pursuit ; but, unfortunately taking a different path through the watery wilderness from the one selected by the flying foe, he was not able to prevent his retreat by a circuitous route to Dam. From the prisoners, especially from the galley-slaves, who had no reason for disguising the condition of the place, he now learned that there were plenty of troops in Sluys, but that there was already a great lack of provisions. They had lost rather than gained by their success in introducing reinforcements without supplies.[22] Upon this information Maurice now resolved to sit quietly down and starve out the garrison. If Spinola, in consequence, should raise the siege of Ostend, in order to relieve a better town, he was prepared to give him battle. If the marquis held fast to his special work, Sluys was sure to surrender. This being the position of affairs, the deputies of the States-General took their leave of the stadholder, and returned to the Hague.[23]

Two months passed. It was midsummer, and the famine in the beleaguered town had become horrible. The same hideous spectacle was exhibited as on all occasions where thousands of human beings are penned together without food. They ate dogs, cats, and rats, the weeds from the churchyards, old saddles, and old shoes, and, when all was gone, they began to eat each other. The small children diminished rapidly in numbers,[24] while beacons and signals of distress were fired day and night, that the obdurate Spinola, only a few miles off, might at last move to their relief.

The archdukes too were beginning to doubt whether the bargain were a good one. To give a strong, new, well-fortified city, with the best of harbours, in exchange for a heap of rubbish which had once been Ostend, seemed unthrifty enough. Moreover, they had not got Ostend, while sure to lose Sluys. At least the cardinal could no longer afford to dispense with the service of his best corps of veterans who had demanded

[22] Fleming, 592. Meteren, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*
[23] Fleming, 592.
[24] Gallucci, ii. 176.

their wages so insolently, and who had laughed at his offer of excommunication by way of payment so heartily. Flinging away his pride, he accordingly made a treaty with the mutinous "squadron" at Grave, granting an entire pardon for all their offences, and promising full payment of their arrears. Until funds should be collected sufficient for this purpose, they were to receive twelve stivers a day each foot-soldier, and twenty-four stivers each cavalryman, and were to have the city of Roermond in pledge. The treaty was negotiated by Guerrera, commandant of Ghent citadel, and by the Archbishop of Roermond, while three distinguished hostages were placed in the keeping of the mutineers until the contract should be faithfully executed: Guerrera himself, Count Fontenoy, son of Marquis d'Havré, and Avalos, commander of a Spanish legion.[25] Thus, after making a present of the services of these veterans for a twelvemonth to the stadholder, and after employing a very important portion of his remaining forces in a vain attempt to reduce their revolt, the archduke had now been fain to purchase their submission by conceding all their demands. It would have been better economy perhaps to come to this conclusion at an earlier day.

It would likewise have been more judicious, according to the lamentations of Justus Lipsius, had the necessity of saving Sluys been thought of in time. Now that it was thoroughly enclosed, so that a mouse could scarce creep through the lines, the archduke was feverish to send in a thousand wagon loads of provisions. Spinola, although in reality commander-in-chief of a Spanish army, and not strictly subject to the orders of the Flemish sovereigns, obeyed the appeal of the archduke, but he obeyed most reluctantly. Two-thirds of Ostend had been effaced, and it was hard to turn even for a moment from the spot until all should have been destroyed.

Leaving Rivas and Bucquoy to guard the entrenchments, and to keep steadily to the work, Spinola took the field with

[25] Meteren, 495, 496.

a large force of all arms, including the late mutineers and the troops of Count Trivulzio. On the 8th August he appeared in the neighbourhood of the Salt and Sweet streams, and exchanged a few cannon-shots with the republicans. Next day he made a desperate assault with three thousand men and some companies of cavalry, upon Lewis William's quarters, where he had reason to believe the lines were weakest. He received from that most vigilant commander a hearty welcome, however, and after a long skirmish was obliged to withdraw, carrying off his dead and wounded, together with a few cart-horses which had been found grazing outside the trenches. Not satisfied with these trophies or such results, he remained several days inactive, and then suddenly whirled around Aardenburg with his whole army, directly southward of Sluys, seized the forts of St. Catharine and St. Philip, which had been left with very small garrisons, and then made a furious attempt to break the lines at Oostburg, hoping to cross the fords at that place, and thus push his way into the isle of Cadzand. The resistance to his progress was obstinate, the result for a time doubtful. After severe fighting however he crossed the waters of Oostburg in the face of the enemy.[26] Maurice meantime had collected all his strength at the vital position of Cadzand, hoping to deal, or at least to parry, a mortal blow. 16 Aug.

On the 17th, on Cadzand dyke, between two redoubts, Spinola again met Lewis William, who had been transferred to that important position. A severe struggle ensued. The Spaniards were in superior force, and Lewis William, commanding the advance only of the States troops, was hard pressed. Moving always in the thickest of the fight, he would probably have that day laid down his life, as so many of his race had done before in the cause of the republic, had not Colonel van Dorp come to his rescue, and so laid about him with a great broad sword, that the dyke was 17 May.

[26] Fleming, 593, 594. Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* Meteren, 495. Grotius, xii. 640, 641.

kept until Maurice arrived with Eytzinga's Frisian regiment and other reserves. Van Dorp then fell covered with wounds. Here was the decisive combat. The two commanders-in-chief met face to face for the first time, and could Spinola have gained the position of Cadzand the fate of Maurice must have been sealed. But all his efforts were vain. The stadholder, by coolness and promptness, saved the day, and inflicted a bloody repulse upon the Catholics. Spinola had displayed excellent generalship, but it is not surprising that the young volunteer should have failed upon his first great field day to defeat Maurice of Nassau and his cousin Lewis William. He withdrew discomfited at last, leaving several hundred dead upon the field, definitely renouncing all hope of relieving Sluys, and retiring by way of Dam to his camp before Ostend.[27] Next day the town capitulated.[28] The garrison were allowed to depart with the honours of war, and the same terms were accorded to the inhabitants, both in secular and religious matters, as were usual when Maurice re-occupied any portion of the republic. Between three and four thousand creatures, looking rather like ghosts from the churchyards than living soldiers, marched out, with drums beating, colours displayed, matches lighted, and bullet in mouth. Sixty of them fell dead[29] before the dismal procession had passed out of the gates. Besides these troops were nearly fifteen hundred galley-slaves, even more like shadows than the rest, as they had been regularly sent forth during the latter days of the siege to browse upon soutenelle in the submerged meadows, or to drown or starve if unable to find a sufficient supply of that weed. These unfortunate victims of Mahometan and Christian tyranny were nearly all Turks, and by the care of the Dutch Government were sent back by sea to their homes.[30] A few of them entered the service of the States.

18 Aug.

The evacuation of Sluys by Governor Serrano and his

[27] Fleming, 594, 595. Bentivoglio, Meteren, Grotius, *ubi sup.*
[28] Ibid. [29] Bentivoglio. [30] Meteren, 495.

garrison was upon the 20th August. Next day the stadholder took possession, bestowing the nominal government of the place upon his brother Frederic Henry. The atmosphere, naturally enough, was pestiferous, and young Count Lewis Gunther of Nassau, who had so brilliantly led the cavalry on the famous day of Nieuport, died of fever soon after entering the town,[31] infinitely regretted by every one who wished well to the republic.

Thus an important portion of Zeeland was restored to its natural owners. A seaport which in those days was an excellent one, and more than a compensation for the isolated fishing village already beleaguered for upwards of three years, had been captured in three months. The States-General congratulated their stadholder on such prompt and efficient work, while the garrison of Ostend, first learning the authentic news seven days afterwards, although at a distance of only fourteen miles, had cause to go upon their knees and sing praises to the Most High. 27 Aug. 1604.

The question now arose as to the relief of Ostend. Maurice was decidedly opposed to any such scheme.[32] He had got a better Ostend in Sluys, and he saw no motive for spending money and blood in any further attempt to gain possession of a ruin, which, even if conquered, could only with extreme difficulty be held. The States were of a diametrically opposite opinion. They insisted that the stadholder, so soon as he could complete his preparations, should march straight upon Spinola's works and break up the siege, even at the risk of a general action.[33] They were willing once more to take the terrible chance of a defeat in Flanders. Maurice, with a heavy heart, bowed to their decision, showing by his conduct the very spirit of a republican soldier, obeying the civil magistrate, even when that obedience was like to bring disaster upon the commonwealth. But much was to be done before he could undertake this new adventure.

[31] Meteren, 495. Fleming, 597. [32] Van der Kemp, iii. and notes. [33] Ibid

Meantime the garrison in Ostend were at their last gasp. On being asked by the States-General whether it was possible to hold out for twenty days longer, Marquette called a council of officers, who decided that they would do their best, but that it was impossible to fix a day or hour when resistance must cease. Obviously, however, the siege was in its extreme old age. The inevitable end was approaching.

Before the middle of September the enemy was thoroughly established in possession of the new Hell's Mouth, the new Porcupine, and all the other bastions of the new entrenchment. On the 13th of that month the last supreme effort was made, and the Sand Hill, that all-important redoubt, which during these three dismal years had triumphantly resisted every assault, was at last carried by storm.[34] The enemy had now gained possession of the whole town except Little Troy. The new harbour would be theirs in a few hours, and as for Troy itself, those hastily and flimsily constructed ramparts were not likely to justify the vaunts uttered when they were thrown up nor to hold out many minutes before the whole artillery of Spinola. Plainly on this last morsel of the fatal sandbank the word surrender must be spoken, unless the advancing trumpets of Maurice should now be heard. But there was no such welcome sound in the air. The weather was so persistently rainy and stormy that the roads became impassable, and Maurice, although ready and intending to march towards Spinola to offer him battle, was unable for some days to move.[35] Meantime a council, summoned by Marquette, of all the officers, decided that Ostend must be abandoned now that Ostend had ceased to exist.

13 Sept.

On the 20th September the Accord was signed with Spinola. The garrison were to march out with their arms. They were to carry off four cannon but no powder. All clerical persons were to leave the place, with their goods and chattels. All prisoners taken on both sides during the siege

[34] Fleming, 574. Bentivoglio, iii. 530. Meteren, 497vo, 498.
[35] Van der Kemp, ii. 461, note.

were to be released. Burghers, sutlers, and others, to go whither they would, undisturbed.[36] And thus the archdukes, after three years and seventy-seven days of siege, obtained their prize. Three thousand men, in good health, marched out of little Troy with the honours of war. The officers were entertained by Spinola and his comrades at a magnificent banquet, in recognition of the unexampled heroism with which the town had been defended.[37] Subsequently the whole force marched to the headquarters of the States' army in and about Sluys. They were received by Prince Maurice, who stood bareheaded and surrounded by his most distinguished officers, to greet them and to shake them warmly by the hand.[38] Surely no defeated garrison ever deserved more respect from friend or foe. 20 Sept.

The Archduke Albert and the Infanta Isabella entered the place in triumph, if triumph it could be called. It would be difficult to imagine a more desolate scene. The artillery of the first years of the seventeenth century was not the terrible enginry of destruction that it has become in the last third of the nineteenth, but a cannonade, continued so steadily and so long, had done its work. There were no churches, no houses, no redoubts, no bastions, no walls, nothing but a vague and confused mass of ruin. Spinola conducted his imperial guests along the edge of extinct volcanoes, amid upturned cemeteries, through quagmires which once were moats, over huge mounds of sand, and vast shapeless masses of bricks and masonry, which had been forts. He endeavoured to point out places where mines had been exploded, where ravelins had been stormed, where the assailants had been successful, and where they had been bloodily repulsed. But it was all loathsome, hideous rubbish. There were no human habitations, no hovels, no casemates. The inhabitants had burrowed at last in the earth, like the dumb creatures of the swamps and forests. In every direction the dykes had burst, and the sullen wash of the liberated waves, bearing hither and thither

[36] Accord, in Fleming, Haestens, Meteren, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*
[37] Van der Kemp, ii. 111. Meteren, *ubi sup.* [38] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

the floating wreck of fascines and machinery, of planks and building materials, sounded far and wide over what should have been dry land. The great ship channel, with the unconquered Half-moon upon one side and the incomplete batteries and platforms of Bucquoy on the other, still defiantly opened its passage to the sea, and the retiring fleets of the garrison were white in the offing. All around was the grey expanse of stormy ocean, without a cape or a headland to break its monotony, as the surges rolled mournfully in upon a desolation more dreary than their own. The atmosphere was mirky and surcharged with rain, for the wild equinoctial storm which had held Maurice spell-bound had been raging over land and sea for many days. At every step the unburied skulls of brave soldiers who had died in the cause of freedom grinned their welcome to the conquerors. Isabella wept at the sight.[39] She had cause to weep. Upon that miserable sandbank more than a hundred thousand men had laid down their lives[40] by her decree, in order that she and her husband might at last take possession of a most barren prize. This insignificant fragment of a sovereignty which her wicked old father had presented to her on his deathbed—a sovereignty which he had no more moral right or actual power to confer than if it had been in the planet Saturn—had at last been appropriated at the cost of all this misery. It was of no great value, although its acquisition had caused the expenditure of at least eight millions of florins, divided in nearly equal proportions between the two belligerents. It was in vain that great immunities were offered to those who would remain, or who would consent to

[39] Gallucci, ii. 485.

[40] The numbers of those who were killed or who died of disease in both armies during this memorable siege, have been placed as high as one hundred and forty thousand. (Gallucci, *ubi sup.*) Meteren, 498, says that on the body of a Spanish officer, who fell in one of the innumerable assaults, was found a list of all the officers and privates killed in the Catholic army up to that date (which he does not give), and the amount was 72,124. Another Spanish authority, Juan Ballono, puts the number of the besiegers who perished *in the last year* of the siege at sixty thousand—of course a ridiculous exaggeration. Such preposterous statistics show the impossibility of making anything like a correct estimate. Of the besieged the loss is supposed to have been as heavy as that of their antagonists, but no registers have been preserved.

settle in the foul Golgotha. The original population left the place in mass. No human creatures were left save the wife of a freebooter and her paramour, a journeyman blacksmith.[41] This unsavoury couple, to whom entrance into the purer atmosphere of Zeeland was denied, thenceforth shared with the carrion crows the amenities of Ostend.

[41] Fleming, 580.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Equation between the contending powers — Treaty of peace between King James and the archdukes and the King of Spain — Position of the Provinces — States envoy in England to be styled ambassador — Protest of the Spanish ambassador — Effect of James's peace-treaty on the people of England — Public rejoicings for the victory at Sluys — Spinola appointed commander-in-chief of the Spanish forces — Preparations for a campaign against the States — Seizure of Dutch cruisers — International discord — Destruction of Sarmiento's fleet by Admiral Haultain — Projected enterprise against Antwerp — Descent of Spinola on the Netherland frontier — Oldenzaal and Lingen taken — Movements of Prince Maurice — Encounter of the two armies — Panic of the Netherlanders — Consequent loss and disgrace — Wachtendonk and Cracow taken by Spinola — Spinola's reception in Spain — Effect of his victories — Results of the struggle between Freedom and Absolutism — Affairs in the East — Amboyna taken by Van der Hagen — Contest for possession of the Clove Islands — Commercial treaty between the States and the King of Ternate — Hostilities between the Kings of Ternate and Tydor — Expulsion of the Portuguese from the Moluccas — Du Terrail's attempted assault on Bergen-op-Zoom — Attack on the Dunkirk pirate fleet — Practice of executing prisoners captured at sea.

I HAVE invited the reader's attention to the details of this famous siege because it was not an episode, but almost the sum total, of the great war during the period occupied by its events. The equation between the contending forces indicated the necessity of peace. That equation seemed for the time to have established itself over all Europe. France had long since withdrawn from the actual strife, and kept its idle thunders in a concealed although ever threatening hand. In the East the Pacha of Buda had become Pacha of Pest.[1] Even Gran was soon to fall before the Turk, whose advancing horse-tails might thus almost be descried from the walls of Vienna.[2] Stephen Botschkay meantime had made himself master of Transylvania, concluded peace with Ahmet,

[1] Meteren, 502vo. [2] Ibid.

and laughed at the Emperor Rudolph for denouncing him as a rebel.[3]

Between Spain and England a far different result had been reached than the one foreshadowed in the portentous colloquies between King James and Maximilian de Bethune. Those conferences have been purposely described with some minuteness, in order that the difference often existing between vast projects and diametrically opposed and very insignificant conclusions might once more be exhibited.

In the summer of 1603 it had been firmly but mysteriously arranged between the monarchs of France and Great Britain that the House of Austria should be crushed, its territories parcelled out at the discretion of those two potentates, the imperial crown taken from the Habsburgs, the Spaniards driven out of the Netherlands, an alliance offensive and defensive made with the Dutch republic, while the East and West Indies were to be wrested by main force of the allies, from Spain, whose subjects were thenceforth to be for ever excluded from those lucrative regions. As for the Jesuits, who were to James as loathsome as were the Puritans to Elizabeth, the British sovereign had implored the ambassador of his royal brother, almost with tears, never to allow that pestilential brood to regain an entrance into his dominions.[4]

In the summer of 1604 King James made a treaty of peace and amity with the archdukes and with the monarch of Spain, thus extending his friendly relations with the doomed house of Austria. The republic of the Netherlands was left to fight her battles alone ; her imaginary allies looking down upon her struggle with benevolent indifference. As for the Indies, not a syllable of allusion in the treaty was permitted by Spain to that sacred subject ; the ambassador informing the British Government that he gave them access to twelve kingdoms and two seas, while Spain acquired by the treaty access only to two kingdoms and one sea.[5] The new world, however, east or west, from the Antilles to the Moluccas, was the pri-

[3] Meteren, 502vo. [4] Sully, v. 18. [4] Meteren, 500.

vate and indefeasible property of his Catholic Majesty. On religious matters, it was agreed that English residents in Spain should not be compelled to go to mass, but that they should kneel in the street to the Host unless they could get out of the way.[6] In regard to the Netherlands, it was agreed by the two contracting powers that one should never assist the rebels or enemies of the other. With regard to the cities and fortresses of Brill, Flushing, Rammekens, and other cautionary places, where English garrisons were maintained, and which King James was bound according to the contracts of Queen Elizabeth never to restore except to those who had pledged them to the English crown—the king would uphold those contracts. He would, however, endeavour to make an arrangement with the States by which they should agree within a certain period to make their peace with Spain. Should they refuse or fail, he would then consider himself liberated from these previous engagements and free to act concerning those cities in an honourable and reasonable manner, as became a friendly king.[7] Meantime the garrisons should not in any way assist the Hollanders in their hostilities with Spain.[8] English subjects were forbidden to carry into Spain or the obedient Netherlands any property or merchandize belonging to the Hollanders,[9] or to make use of Dutch vessels in their trade with Spain.[10] Both parties agreed to do their best to bring about a pacification in the Netherlands.

No irony certainly could be more exquisite that this last-named article. This was the end of that magnificent conception, the great Anglo-French League against the house of Austria. King James would combine his efforts with King Philip to pacify the Netherlands. The wolf and the watch-dog would unite to bring back the erring flock to the fold. Meantime James would keep the cautionary towns in his clutches, not permitting their garrisons or any of his subjects to assist the rebels on sea or shore. As for the Jesuits, their

[6] Treaty in Meteren, *ubi sup.* Compare Grotius, xiii. 647, 648.
[7] Article vii. of Treaty. [8] Article viii. [9] Article xii. [10] Article xviii.

triumphant re-appearance in France, and the demolition of the pyramid raised to their dishonour on the site of the house where John Castel, who had stabbed Henry IV., had resided, were events about to mark the opening year.[11] Plainly enough Secretary Cecil had out-generalled the French party.

The secret treaty of Hampton Court, the result of the efforts of Rosny and Olden-Barneveld in July of the previous year, was not likely to be of much service in protecting the republic. James meant to let the dead treaties bury their dead, to live in peace with all the world, and to marry his sons and daughters to Spanish Infantes and Infantas. Meantime, although he had sheathed the sword which Elizabeth had drawn against the common enemy, and had no idea of fighting or spending money for the States, he was willing that their diplomatic agent should be called ambassador. The faithful and much experienced Noel de Caron coveted that distinction, and moved thereby the spleen of Henry's envoy at the Hague, Buzanval, who probably would not have objected to the title himself. "'Twill be a folly," he said, "for him to present himself on the pavement as a prancing steed, and then be treated like a poor hack. He has been too long employed to put himself in such a plight. But there are lunatics everywhere and of all ages." [12]

Never had the Advocate seemed so much discouraged. Ostend had fallen, and the defection of the British sovereign was an off-set for the conquest of Sluys. He was more urgent with the French Government for assistance than he had ever been before. "A million florins a year from France," he said "joined to two millions raised in the provinces, would enable them to carry on the war. The ship was in good condition," he added, "and fit for a long navigation without danger of shipwreck if there were only biscuit enough on board.[13] Otherwise she was lost. Before that time came he should quit the helm which he had been holding the more

[11] Meteren, 502.

[12] Buzanval to Villeroy, in Deventer, iii. 1–9. At the same epoch the French king asked Aerssens if he too was to have the rank of ambassador. That diplomatist replied that he hoped not, unless his salary was to be raised at the same time.—Ibid. p. 24.

[13] Ibid.

resolutely since the peace of Vervins because the king had told him, when concluding it, that if three years' respite should be given him he would enter into the game afresh, and take again upon his shoulders the burthen which inevitable necessity had made him throw down. But," added Olden-Barneveld, bitterly, "there is little hope of it now, after his neglect of the many admirable occasions during the siege of Ostend." [14]

So soon as the Spanish ambassador learned that Caron was to be accepted into the same diplomatic rank as his own, he made an infinite disturbance, protested most loudly and passionately to the king at the indignity done to his master by this concession to the representative of a crew of traitors and rebels, and demanded in the name of the treaty just concluded that Caron should be excluded in such capacity from all access to court.[15]

As James was nearly forty years of age, as the Hollanders had been rebels ever since he was born, and as the King of Spain had exercised no sovereignty over them within his memory, this was naturally asking too much of him in the name of his new-born alliance with Spain. So he assumed a position of great dignity, notwithstanding the Constable's clamour, and declared his purpose to give audience to the agents of the States by whatever title they presented themselves before him. In so doing he followed the example, he said, of others who (a strange admission on his part) were as wise as himself. It was not for him to censure the crimes and faults of the States, if such they had committed. He had not been the cause of their revolt from Spanish authority, and it was quite sufficient that he had stipulated to maintain neutrality between the two belligerents.[16] And with this the ambassador of his Catholic Majesty, having obtained the substance of a very advantageous treaty, was fain to abandon opposition to the shadowy title by which James sought to indemnify the republic for his perfidy.[17]

[14] Meteren, 502.
[15] Ibid. 501.
[16] Ibid.
[17] At the same time the republican agent, although recognized as ambas-

The treaty of peace with Spain gave no pleasure to the English public. There was immense enthusiasm in London at the almost simultaneous fall of Sluys, but it was impossible for the court to bring about a popular demonstration of sympathy with the abandonment of the old ally and the new-born affection for the ancient enemy. "I can assure your mightinesses," wrote Caron, "that no promulgation was ever received in London with more coolness, yes—with more

sador, received but slender encouragement in his interviews with the British sovereign. "When I tell those on the other side," said James, "that you are not ready to treat with them, they will say that all wars must sooner or later come to an end. What reply shall I make to that?"

"Say that the king has long ago forfeited all right to these provinces," answered Caron; "that the sovereignty according to law has fallen into the bosom of my lords the States; that the Spaniard, having usurped so many other countries in the world, might leave us this little bit for the sake of living in peace."

James replied that kings never willingly gave up their provinces. "And the Netherlands are no longer the king's to give up," returned the ambassador. His majesty expressed his intention, however, to do nothing more in the matter. He should maintain strict neutrality. At the same time, with amusing inconsistency, he warmly recognised the identity of the Dutch cause with his own. "In your preservation lies my own interest. Your ruin would be my great loss. Rather than it should go so far I will venture my own person and all that God has given me in this world, but I trust that God will never let it come so far as this. As to the assistance you ask of me, God is my witness if it be not my wish that I were able to grant it, but I have told you many times that I was principally moved to make peace by my necessities."

This statement of the king's financial plight might be true enough. It is certain that in order to obtain the means to make decent provision for the household at his accession it had been necessary to send jewelry and other valuable effects to Amsterdam as a pledge for a secret loan of 25,000*l*. But there were graver and far more dangerous causes at work in the English court to affect a pacification and even an alliance with Spain, than a temporary financial embarrassment.

It could also scarcely console the States' envoy to be told that in case of uttermost need the king meant to lay down his life for the republic. The spectacle of James leading a forlorn hope against Spain was not an inspiring one, especially as the martial sovereign of France had turned his face away from his old friends. "Had the Spaniard given me as much cause of quarrel as he has to the most Christian king," said James, "I should certainly have broken with him. Not only I should have done my best to help you, but I should have plunged into the fight at the risk of life and property."

These were brave words. The very near future was, however, to show whether the British king would feel the outrages of Spain against himself as deeply as he now resented the injuries of the same power to his brother Henry. It was soon obvious enough that the most to be hoped of England was that she would not interfere to prevent such assistance as France might be willing to grant to the republic, James becoming more and more besotted with the idea of an alliance with Spain. A few months later Rosny told Aerssens that the King of Spain found quite as much favour at the English court as he did with the Duke of Savoy. See Deventer, iii. 10-14, 15, 40.

sadness. No mortal has shown the least satisfaction in words or deeds, but, on the contrary, people have cried out openly, 'God save our good neighbours the States of Holland and Zeeland, and grant them victory!' On Sunday, almost all the preachers gave thanks from their pulpits for the victory which their good neighbours had gained at Sluys, but would not say a word about the peace. The people were admonished to make bonfires, but you may be very sure not a bonfire was to be seen. But, in honour of the victory, all the vessels in St. Catharine's Docks fired salutes at which the Spaniards were like to burst with spite. The English clap their hands and throw their caps in the air when they hear anything published favourable to us, but, it must be confessed, they are now taking very dismal views of affairs. *Vox populi vox Dei.*"[18]

The rejoicing in Paris was scarcely less enthusiastic or apparently less sincere than in London. "The news of the surrender of Sluys," wrote Aerssens, "is received with so much joy by small and great that one would have said it was their own exploit. His Majesty has made such demonstrations in his actions and discourse that he has not only been advised by his council to dissemble in the matter, but has undergone reproaches from the pope's nuncius of having made a league with your Mightinesses to the prejudice of the King of Spain. His Majesty wishes your Mightinesses prosperity with all his heart, yea so that he would rather lose his right arm than see your Mightinesses in danger. Be assured that he means roundly, and we should pray God for his long life; for I don't see that we can expect anything from these regions after his death."[19]

It was ere long to be seen, however, roundly as the king meant it, that the republic was to come into grave peril without causing him to lose his right arm, or even to wag his finger, save in reproach of their Mightinesses.

The republic, being thus left to fight its battles alone, girded its loins anew for the conflict. During the remainder

[18] Van der Kemp, ii. 457. [19] Ibid. 453.

of the year 1604, however, there were no military operations of consequence. Both belligerents needed a brief repose. The siege of Ostend had not been a siege. It was a long pitched battle between the new system and the old, between absolutism and the spirit of religious, political, and mercantile freedom. Absolutism had gained the lists on which the long duel had been fought, but the republic had meantime exchanged that war-blasted spot for a valuable and commodious position. It was certainly an advantage, as hostilities were necessarily to have continued somewhere during all that period, that all the bloodshed and desolation had been concentrated upon one insignificant locality, and one more contiguous to the enemy's possessions than to those of the united States. It was very doubtful, however, whether all that money and blood might not have been expended in some other manner more beneficial to the cause of the archdukes. At least it could hardly be maintained that they took anything by the capitulation of Ostend but the most barren and worthless of trophies. Eleven old guns, partly broken, and a small quantity of ammunition, were all the spoils of war found in the city after its surrender.

The Marquis Spinola went to Spain. On passing through Paris he was received with immense enthusiasm by Henry IV., whose friendship for the States, and whose desperate designs against the house of Austria, did not prevent him from warmly congratulating the great Spanish general on his victory. It was a victory, said Henry, which he could himself have never achieved, and, in recognition of so great a triumph, he presented Spinola with a beautiful Thracian horse, valued at twelve hundred ducats.[20] Arriving in Spain, the conqueror found himself at once the object of the open applause and the scarcely concealed hatred of the courtiers and politicians. He ardently desired to receive as his guerdon the rank of grandee of Spain. He met with a refusal.[21] To keep his hat on his head in presence of the sovereign was the highest possible reward. Should that be bestowed upon him now, urged

[20] Gallucci, ii. 194. [21] Ibid. 200.

Lerma, what possible recompense could be imagined for the great services which all felt confident that he was about to render in the future? He must continue to remove his hat in the monarch's company. Meantime, if he wished the title of prince, with considerable revenues attached to his principality, this was at his disposal.[22] It must be confessed that in a monarchy where the sentiment of honour was supposed to be the foundation of the whole structure there is something chivalrous and stimulating to the imagination in this preference by the great general of a shadowy but rare distinction to more substantial acquisitions. Nevertheless, as the grandeeship was refused, it is not recorded that he was displeased with the principality. Meantime there was a very busy intrigue to deprive him of the command-in-chief of the Catholic forces in Flanders, and one so nearly successful that Mexia, governor of Antwerp citadel, was actually appointed in Spinola's stead. It was only after long and anxious conferences at Valladolid with the king and the Duke of Lerma, and after repeated statements in letters from the archdukes that all their hopes of victory depended on retaining the Genoese commander-in-chief, that the matter was finally arranged. Mexia received an annual pension of eight thousand ducats, and to Spinola was assigned five hundred ducats monthly, as commander-in-chief under the archduke, with an equal salary as agent for the king's affairs in Flanders.[23]

Early in the spring he returned to Brussels, having made fresh preparations for the new campaign in which he was to measure himself before the world against Maurice of Nassau.

Spinola had removed the thorn from the Belgic lion's foot: "Ostendæ erasit fatalis Spinola spinam."[24] And although it may be doubted whether the relief was as thorough as had been hoped, yet a freedom of movement had unquestionably been gained. There was now at least what for a long time had not existed, a possibility for imagining some new and perhaps more effective course of campaigning. The

[22] Galucci, ii. 194-202. [23] Ibid. [24] Ibid. 182.

young Genoese commander-in-chief returned from Spain early in May, with the Golden Fleece around his neck, and with full powers from the Catholic king to lay out his work, subject only to the approbation of the archduke. It was not probable that Albert, who now thoroughly admired and leaned upon the man of whom he had for a time been disposed to be jealous, would interfere with his liberty of action. There had also been—thanks to Spinola's influence with the cabinet at Madrid and the merchants of Genoa—much more energy in recruiting and in providing the necessary sinews of war. Moreover it had been resolved to make the experiment of sending some of the new levies by sea, instead of subjecting them all to the long and painful overland march through Spain, Italy, and Germany.[25] A terzo of infantry was on its way from Naples, and two more were expected from Milan, but it was decided that the Spanish troops should be embarked on board a fleet of transports, mainly German and English, and thus carried to the shores of the obedient Netherlands.[26]

The States-General got wind of these intentions, and set Vice-Admiral Haultain upon the watch to defeat the scheme. That well-seasoned mariner accordingly, with a sufficient fleet of war-galleots, cruised thenceforth with great assiduity in the chops of the channel. Already the late treaty between Spain and England had borne fruits of bitterness to the republic. The Spanish policy had for the time completely triumphed in the council of James. It was not surprising therefore that the partisans of that policy should occasionally indulge in manifestations of malevolence towards the upstart little commonwealth which had presumed to enter into commercial rivalry with the British realm, and to assert a place among the nations of the earth. An order had just been issued by the English Government that none of its subjects should engage in the naval service of any foreign power. This decree was a kind of corollary to the Spanish treaty, was levelled directly against the

[25] Grotius, xiv. 658, 659. Meteren, 519vo. [26] Ibid.

Hollanders, and became the pretext of intolerable arrogance, both towards their merchantmen and their lesser war-vessels. Admiral Monson, an especial partisan of Spain, was indefatigable in exercising the right he claimed of visiting foreign vessels off the English coast, in search of English sailors violating the proclamation of neutrality. On repeated occasions prizes taken by Dutch cruisers from the Spaniards, and making their way with small prize crews to the ports of the republic, were overhauled, visited, and seized by the English admiral, who brought the vessels into the harbours of his own country, liberated the crews, and handed ships and cargoes over to the Spanish ambassador.[27] Thus prizes fairly gained by nautical skill and hard fighting, off Spain, Portugal, Brazil, or even more distant parts of the world, were confiscated almost in sight of port, in utter disregard of public law or international decency. The States-General remonstrated with bitterness. Their remonstrances were answered by copious arguments, proving, of course, to the entire satisfaction of the party who had done the wrong, that no practice could be more completely in harmony with reason and justice. Meantime the Spanish ambassador sold the prizes, and appropriated the proceeds towards carrying on the war against the republic ; the Dutch sailors, thus set ashore against their will and against law on the neutral coast of England, being left to get home as they could, or to starve if they could do no better. As for the States, they had the legal arguments of their late ally to console them for the loss of their ships.

Simultaneously with these events considerable levies of troops were made in England by the archduke, in spite of all the efforts of the Dutch ambassador to prevent this one-sided neutrality,[28] while at the other ends of the world mercantile jealousy in both the Indies was fast combining with other causes already rife to increase the international discord. Out of all this fuel it was fated that a blaze of hatred between the two leading powers of the new era, the United Kingdom and the United Republic, should one day burst forth, which was

[27] Grotius, xiv. 658, 659. Meteren, 518vo. [28] Ibid. 518.

to be fanned by passion, prejudice, and a mistaken sentiment of patriotism and self-interest on both sides, and which not all the bloodshed of more than one fierce war could quench. The traces of this savage sentiment are burnt deeply into the literature, language, and traditions of both countries, and it is strange enough that the epoch at which chronic wrangling and international coolness changed into furious antipathy between the two great Protestant powers of Europe—for great they already both were, despite the paucity of their population and resources, as compared with nations which were less influenced by the spirit of the age or had less aptness in obeying its impulse—should be dated from the famous year of Guy Fawkes.

Meantime the Spanish troops, embarked in eight merchant ships and a few pinnaces, were slowly approaching their destination. They had been instructed, in case they found it impracticable to enter a Flemish port, to make for the hospitable shores of England, the Spanish ambassador and those whom he had bribed at the court of James having already provided for their protection.[29] Off Dover Admiral Haultain got sight of Sarmiento's little fleet. He made short work with it. Faithfully carrying out the strenuous orders of the States-General, he captured some of the ships, burned one, and ran others aground after a very brief resistance. Some of the soldiers and crews were picked up by English vessels cruising in the neighbourhood and narrowly watching the conflict. A few stragglers escaped by swimming, but by far the greater proportion of the newly-arrived troops were taken prisoners, tied together two and two, and then, at a given signal from the admiral's ship, tossed into the sea.[30]

Not Peter Titelmann, nor Julian Romero, nor the Duke of Alva himself, ever manifested greater alacrity in wholesale murder than was shown by this admiral of the young

[29] "Quorum omnium curam Petrus Cubiara acceperat hoc inter cætera mandato ut si Flandria negaretur vitato Galliæ litore Britanniæ oram adiret tutum ibi hospitium ope legati Hispanici et quos ille Britannorum donis emerat habiturus."—Grot. xiv. 658.

[30] Ibid. Meteren, *ubi sup.* Wagenaar, ix. 186.

republic in fulfilling the savage decrees of the States-General.[31]

Thus at least one-half of the legion perished. The pursuit of the ships was continued within English waters, when the guns of Dover Castle opened vigorously upon the recent allies of England, in order to protect her newly-found friends in their sore distress. Doubtless in the fervour of the work the Dutch admiral had violated the neutral coast of England, so that the cannonade from the castle was technically justified. It was however a biting satire upon the proposed Protestant league against Spain and universal monarchy in behalf of the Dutch republic, that England was already doing her best to save a Spanish legion and to sink a Dutch fleet. The infraction of English sovereignty was unquestionable if judged by the more scrupulous theory of modern days, but it was well remarked by the States-General, in answer to the remonstrances of James's Government, that the Dutch admiral, knowing that the pirates of Dunkirk roamed at will through English waters in search of their prey, might have hoped for some indulgence of a similar character to the ships of the republic.[32]

Thus nearly the whole of the Spanish legion perished. The soldiers who escaped to the English coast passed the winter miserably in huts, which they were allowed to construct on the sands, but nearly all, including the lieutenant-colonel commanding, Pedro Cubiera, died of famine or of wounds. A few small vessels of the expedition succeeded in reaching the Flemish coast, and landing a slight portion of the terzo.[33]

[31] Certainly it must be admitted that the world makes some little progress in civilization. To exterminate unorganized and irresponsible bands of brigands disgracing the name of soldiers, may still be inevitable in the interest of humanity, but that regular troops should be destroyed in cold blood, because embarked and captured not in war-vessels but in mercantile and neutral transports, was a barbarity which seems incredible to us, but which, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, was not rebuked by the most gentle and enlightened spirits of the age.

This whole story is minutely related by the illustrious Hugo Grotius, without a syllable of censure. Hist. xiv. 657, 658.

[32] Ibid. 659.

[33] Grotius, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Wagenaar, ix. 184–187. Winwood, ii. 82; who was informed by Lord Salisbury that more than one hundred men in the Dutch fleet were killed by the Dover cannon.

The campaign of 1605 opened but languidly. The strain upon the resources of the Netherlands, thus unaided, was becoming severe, although there is no doubt that, as the India traffic slowly developed itself, the productive force of the commonwealth visibly increased, while the thrifty habits of its citizens, and their comparative abstinence from unproductive consumption, still enabled it to bear the tremendous burthen of the war. A new branch of domestic industry had grown out of the India trade, great quantities of raw silk being now annually imported from the East into Holland, to be wrought into brocades, tapestries, damasks, velvets, satins, and other luxurious fabrics for European consumption.[34] It is a curious phenomenon in the history of industry that while at this epoch Holland was the chief seat of silk manufactures, the great financier of Henry IV. was congratulating his sovereign and himself that natural causes had for ever prevented the culture or manufacture of silk in France.[35] If such an industry were possible, he was sure that the decline of martial spirit in France and an eternal dearth of good French soldiers would be inevitable, and he even urged that the importation of such luxurious fabrics should be sternly prohibited, in order to preserve the moral health of the people.[36] The practical Hollanders were more inclined to leave silk farthingales and brocaded petticoats to be dealt with by thunderers from the pulpit or indignant fathers of families. Meantime the States-General felt instinctively that the little commonwealth grew richer, the more useful or agreeable things its burghers could call into existence out of nothingness, to be exchanged for the powder and bullets, timber and cordage, requisite for its eternal fight with universal monarchy, and that the richer the burghers grew the more capable they were of paying their taxes. It was not the fault of the States that the insane ambition of Spain and the archdukes compelled them to exhaust themselves annually by the most unproductive consumption that man is ever likely to devise, that of scientifically slaughtering his

[34] Meteren, 536. [35] Sully, v. 77–79, *seqq.* [36] Ibid.

brethren, because to practise economy in that regard would be to cease to exist, or to accept the most intolerable form of slavery.

The forces put into the field in the spring of 1605 were but meagre. There was also, as usual, much difference of opinion between Maurice and Barneveld as to the most judicious manner of employing them, and as usual the docile stadholder submitted his better judgment to the States.[37] It can hardly be too much insisted upon that the high-born Maurice always deported himself in fact, and as it were unconsciously, as the citizen soldier of a little republic, even while personally invested with many of the attributes of exalted rank, and even while regarded by many of his leading fellow-citizens as the legitimate and predestined sovereign of the newly-born state.

Early in the spring a great enterprise against Antwerp was projected. It failed utterly. Maurice, at Bergen-op-Zoom, despatched seven thousand troops up the Scheld, under command of Ernest Casimir. The flotilla was a long time getting under weigh, and instead of effecting a surprise, the army, on reaching the walls of Antwerp, found the burghers and garrison not in the least astonished, but on the contrary entirely prepared. Ernest returned after a few insignificant skirmishes, having accomplished nothing.[38]

Maurice next spent a few days in reducing the castle of Wouda, not far from Bergen, and then, transporting his army once more to the isle of Cadzand, he established his head-quarters at Watervliet, near Ysendyke. Spinola followed him, having thrown a bridge across the Scheld. Maurice was disposed to reduce a fort, well called Patience,[39] lying over against the isle of Walcheren. Spinola took up a position by which he defended the place as with an impenetrable buckler. A game of skill now began between these two adepts in the art of war, for already the volunteer had taken rank among the highest professors of the new school. It was the object

[37] Van der Kemp, ii. 113.
[38] Ibid. 113, 114. Grotius, xiv. 656, 657. Meteren, 518. [39] Grot. *ubi sup.*

of Maurice, who knew himself on the whole outnumbered, to divine his adversary's intentions. Spinola was supposed to be aiming at Sluys, at Grave, at Bergen-op-Zoom, possibly even at some more remote city, like Rheinberg, while rumours as to his designs, flying directly from his camp, were as thick as birds in the air. They were let loose on purpose by the artful Genoese, who all the time had a distinct and definite plan which was not yet suspected. The dilatoriness of the campaign was exasperating. It might be thought that the war was to last another half century, from the excessive inertness of both parties. The armies had all gone into winter quarters in the previous November, Spinola had spent nearly six months in Spain, midsummer had come and gone, and still Maurice was at Watervliet, guessing at his adversary's first move. On the whole, he had inclined to suspect a design upon Rheinberg, and had accordingly sent his brother Henry with a detachment to strengthen the garrison of that place. On the 1st of August however he learned that Spinola had crossed the Meuse and the Rhine, with ten thousand foot and three thousand horse, and that leaving Count Bucquoy with six thousand foot and one thousand five hundred horse in the neighbourhood of the Rhine, to guard a couple of redoubts which had been constructed for a basis at Kaiserswerth, he was marching with all possible despatch towards Friesland and Groningen.[40]

The Catholic general had concealed his design in a masterly manner. He had detained Maurice in the isle of Cadzand, the States still dreaming of a victorious invasion on their part of obedient Flanders, and the stadholder hesitating to quit his position of inactive observation, lest the moment his back was turned the rapid Spinola might whirl down upon Sluys, that most precious and skilfully acquired possession of the republic, when lo! his formidable antagonist was marching in force upon what

August.

[40] Bentivoglio, iii. 533, 534. Meteren, 521, 522. Grotius, xiv. 660, 661. Van der Kemp, ii. 114, 115, and notes.

the prince well knew to be her most important and least guarded frontier.

On the 8th August the Catholic general was before Oldenzaal, which he took in three days, and then advanced to Lingen. Should that place fall—and the city was known to be most inadequately garrisoned and supplied—it would be easy for the foe to reduce Coeworden, and so seize the famous pass over the Bourtanger Morass, march straight to Embden—then in a state of municipal revolution on account of the chronic feuds between its counts and the population, and therefore an easy prey—after which all Friesland and Groningen would be at his mercy, and his road open to Holland and Utrecht; in short, into the very bowels of the republic.

Aug. 8.

On the 4th August Maurice broke up his camp in Flanders, and leaving five thousand men under Colonel Van der Noot, to guard the positions there, advanced rapidly to Deventer, with the intention of saving Lingen. It was too late. That very important place had been culpably neglected. The garrison consisted of but one cannoneer, and he had but one arm.[41] A burgher guard, numbering about three hundred, made such resistance as they could, and the one-armed warrior fired a shot or two from a rusty old demi-cannon. Such opposition to the accomplished Italian was naturally not very effective. On the 18th August the place capitulated.[42] Maurice, arriving at Deventer, and being now strengthened by his cousin Lewis William with such garrison troops as could be collected, learned the mortifying news with sentiments almost akin to despair. It was now to be a race for Coeworden, and the fleet-footed Spinola was a day's march at least in advance of his competitor. The key to the fatal morass would soon be in his hands. To the inexpressible joy of the stadholder, the Genoese seemed suddenly struck with blindness. The prize was almost in his hands and he threw away all his advan-

18 Aug.

[41] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[42] Bentivoglio, Grotius, Meteren, Van der Kemp, *ubi sup.*

tages. Instead of darting at once upon Coeworden he paused for nearly a month, during which period he seemed intoxicated with a success so rapidly achieved, and especially with his adroitness in outwitting the great stadholder.[43] On the 14th September he made a retrograde movement towards the Rhine, leaving two thousand five hundred men in Lingen. Maurice, giving profound thanks to God for his enemy's infatuation, passed by Lingen, and having now, with his cousin's reinforcements, a force of nine thousand foot and three thousand horse, threw himself into Coeworden, strengthened and garrisoned that vital fortress which Spinola would perhaps have taken as easily as he had done Lingen, made all the neighbouring positions secure, and then fell back towards Wesel on the Rhine, in order to watch his antagonist.[44] Spinola had established his headquarters at Ruhrort, a place where the river Ruhr empties into the Rhine. He had yielded to the remonstrances of the Archbishop of Cologne, to whom Kaiserwerth belonged, and had abandoned the forts which Bucquoy, under his directions, had constructed at that place.[45]

14 Sept.

24 Sept.

The two armies now gazed at each other, at a respectful distance, for a fortnight longer, neither commander apparently having any very definite purpose. At last, Maurice having well reconnoitred his enemy, perceived a weak point in his extended lines. A considerable force of Italian cavalry, with some infantry, was stationed at the village of Mulheim, on the Ruhr, and apparently out of convenient supporting distance from Spinola's main army. The stadholder determined to deliver a sudden blow upon this tender spot, break through the lines, and bring on a general action by surprise. Assembling his well-seasoned and veteran troopers in force, he divided them into two formidable bands, one under the charge of his young brother Frederic Henry, the other under that most brilliant of cavalry officers, Marcellus Bax, hero of Turnhout and many another well-fought field.

[43] Meteren. Van der Kemp. [44] Authorities cited. [45] Bentivoglo, iii. 536.

The river Ruhr was a wide but desultory stream, easily fordable in many places. On the opposite bank to Mulheim was the Castle of Broek, and some hills of considerable elevation. Bax was ordered to cross the river and seize the castle and the heights, Count Henry to attack the enemy's camp in front, while Maurice himself, following rapidly with the advance of infantry and wagons, was to sustain the assault.

8 Oct. Marcellus Bax, rapid and dashing as usual, crossed the Ruhr, captured Broek Castle with ease, and stood ready to prevent the retreat of the Spaniards. Taken by surprise in front, they would naturally seek refuge on the other side of the river. That stream was not difficult for infantry, but as the banks were steep, cavalry could not easily extricate themselves from the water, except at certain prepared landings. Bax waited however for some time in vain for the flying Spaniards. It was not destined that the stadholder should effect many surprises that year. The troopers under Frederic Henry had made their approaches through an intricate path, often missing their way, and in far more leisurely fashion than was intended, so that outlying scouts had brought in information of the coming attack. As Count Henry approached the village, Trivulzio's cavalry was found drawn up in battle array, formidable in numbers, and most fully prepared for their visitors from Wesel. The party most astonished was that which came to surprise. In an instant one of those uncontrollable panics broke out to which even veterans are as subject as to dysentery or scurvy. The best cavalry of Maurice's army turned their backs at the very sight of the foe, and galloped off much faster than they had come.

Meantime, Marcellus Bax was assaulted, not only by his late handful of antagonists, who had now rallied, but by troops from Mulheim, who began to wade across the stream. At that moment he was cheered by the sight of Count Henry coming on with a very few of his troopers who had stood to their colours. A simultaneous charge from both banks at the enemy floundering in the river was attempted. It

might have been brilliantly successful, but the panic had crossed the river faster than the Spaniards could do, and the whole splendid picked cavalry force of the republic, commanded by the youngest son of William the Silent, and by the favourite cavalry commander of her armies, was, after a hot but brief action, in disgraceful and unreasonable flight. The stadholder reached the bank of that fatal stream only to witness this maddening spectacle, instead of the swift and brilliant triumph which he was justified in expecting. He did his best to stem the retreating tide. He called upon the veterans, by the memory of Turnhout and Nieuport, and so many other victories, to pause and redeem their name before it was too late. He taunted them with their frequent demands to be led to battle, and their expressed impatience at enforced idleness. He denounced them as valiant only for plundering defenceless peasants, and as cowards against armed men; as trusting more to their horses' heels than to their own right hands. He invoked curses upon them for deserting his young brother, who, conspicuous among them by his gilded armour, the orange-plumes upon his casque, and the bright orange-scarf across his shoulders, was now sorely pressed in the struggling throng.[46]

It was all in vain. Could Maurice have thrown himself into the field, he might, as in the crisis of the republic's fate at Nieuport, have once more converted ruin into victory by the magic of his presence. But the river was between him and the battle, and he was an enforced spectator of his country's disgrace.

For a few brief moments his demeanour, his taunts, and his supplications had checked the flight of his troops.

A stand was made by a portion of the cavalry and a few detached but fierce combats took place. Count Frederic Henry was in imminent danger. Leading a mere handful of his immediate retainers, he threw himself into the thickest of the fight, with the characteristic audacity of his house. A Spanish trooper aimed his carbine full at his

8 Oct.

[46] Grotius, xiv. 671.

face. It missed fire, and Henry, having emptied his own pistol, was seized by the floating scarf upon his breast by more than one enemy. There was a brief struggle, and death or capture seemed certain; when an unknown hand laid his nearest antagonist low, and enabled him to escape from overpowering numbers.[47] The soldier, whose devotion thus saved the career of the youngest Orange-Nassau destined to be so long and so brilliant, from being cut off so prematurely, was never again heard of,[48] and doubtless perished in the fray.

Meantime the brief sparkle of valour on the part of the States' troops had already vanished. The adroit Spinola, hurrying personally to the front, had caused such a clangor from all the drums and trumpets in Broek and its neighbourhood to be made as to persuade the restive cavalry that the whole force of the enemy was already upon them. The day was obviously lost, and Maurice, with a heavy heart, now himself gave the signal to retreat. Drawing up the greater part of his infantry in solid mass upon the banks to protect the passage, he sent a force to the opposite side, Horace Vere being the first to wade the stream. All that was then possible to do was accomplished, and the panic flight converted into orderly retreat, but it was a day of disaster and disgrace for the republic.[49]

About five hundred of the best States' cavalry were left dead on the field, but the stain upon his almost unsullied flag was more cutting to the stadholder's heart than the death of his veterans. The material results were in truth almost even. The famous cavalry general, Count Trivulzio, with at least three hundred Spaniards, fell in the combat,[50] but the glory of having defeated the best cavalry of Europe in a stricken field and under the very eyes of the stadholder would have been sufficient compensation to Spinola for much greater losses.

Maurice withdrew towards Wesel, sullen but not despondING. His forces were meagre, and although he had been out-

[47] Grotius, xiv. 671. Meteren, 523vo. [48] Grotius, *ubi sup.*
[49] Ibid. xiv. 669–672. Meteren, 523 and vo. Bentivoglio, iii. 537. Van der Kemp, ii. 116, 510, 511. [50] Ibid.

generalled, out-marched, and defeated in the open field, at least the Genoese had not planted the blow which he had meditated in the very heart of the republic.

Autumn was now far advanced, and dripping with rain. The roads and fields were fast becoming impassable sloughs, and no further large operations could be expected in this campaign. Yet the stadholder's cup was not full, and he was destined to witness two more triumphs of his rival, now fast becoming famous, before this year of disasters should close. On the 27th October, Spinola took the city of Wachtendonk, after ten days' siege, and on the 5th of November the strong place of Cracow.[51] 27 Oct. 5 Nov.

Maurice was forced to see these positions captured almost under his eyes, being now quite powerless to afford relief. His troops had dwindled by sickness and necessary detachments for garrison-work to a comparatively insignificant force, and very soon afterwards both armies went into winter quarters.[52]

The States were excessively disappointed at the results of the year's work, and deep if not loud were the reproaches cast upon the stadholder. Certainly his military reputation had not been augmented by this campaign. He had lost many places, and had not gained an inch of ground anywhere. Already the lustre of Sluys, of Nieuport, and Turnhout were growing dim, for Maurice had so accustomed the republic to victories that his own past triumphs seemed now his greatest enemies. Moreover he had founded a school out of which apt pupils had already graduated, and it would seem that the Genoese volunteer had rapidly profited by his teachings as only a man endowed with exquisite military genius could have done.

Yet, after all, it seems certain that, with the stadholder's limited means, and with the awful consequences to the country of a total defeat in the open field, the Fabian tactics, which he had now deliberately adopted, were the most reasonable. The invader of foreign domains, the suppressor of great

[51] Meteren, 523vo. Bentivoglio, iii. 536. Grot. xiv. 673. Van der Kemp, ii. 117.

[52] Ibid.

revolts, can indulge in the expensive luxury of procrastination only at imminent peril. For the defence, it is always possible to conquer by delay, and it was perfectly understood between Spinola and his ablest advisers at the Spanish court [53] that the blows must be struck thick and fast, and at the most vulnerable places, or that the victory would be lost.

Time was the ally not of the Spanish invaders, who came from afar, but of the Dutch burghers, who remained at home. "Jam aut Nunquam," [54] was the motto upon the Italian's banners.

In proportion to the depression in the republic at the results of this year's campaigning was the elation at the Spanish court. Bad news and false news had preceded the authentic intelligence of Spinola's victories. The English envoy had received unquestionable information that the Catholic general had sustained an overwhelming defeat at the close of the campaign, with a loss of three thousand five hundred men.[55] The tale was implicitly believed by king and cabinet, so that when, very soon afterwards, the couriers arrived bringing official accounts of the victory gained over the veteran cavalry of the States in the very presence of the stadholder, followed by the crowning triumph of Wachtendonk, the demonstrations of joy were all the more vivacious in consequence of the previous gloom.[56] Spinola himself followed hard upon the latest messengers, and was received with ovations.[57] Never, since the days of Alexander Farnese, had a general at the Spanish court been more cordially caressed or hated. Had Philip the Prudent been still upon the throne, he would have felt it his duty to make immediate arrangements for poisoning him. Certainly his plans and his popularity would have been undermined in the most artistic manner.

But Philip III., more dangerous to rabbits than to generals, left the Genoese to settle the plans of his next campaign with Lerma and his parasites.

The subtle Spinola, having, in his despatches, ascribed the chief merit of the victories to Louis Velasco, a Spaniard, while

[53] Grot. xiv. 660. [54] Ibid. [55] Gallucci, ii. 253, *seqq.* [56] Ibid. [57] Ibid.

his own original conception of transferring the war to Friesland was attributed by him with magnificent effrontery to Lerma and to the king[58]—who were probably quite ignorant of the existence of that remote province—succeeded in maintaining his favourable position at court, and was allowed, by what was called the war-council, to manage matters nearly at his pleasure.

It is difficult however to understand how so much clamour should have been made over such paltry triumphs. All Europe rang with a cavalry fight in which less than a thousand saddles on both sides had been emptied, leading to no result, and with the capture of a couple of insignificant towns, of which not one man in a thousand had ever heard.

Spinola had doubtless shown genius of a subtle and inventive order, and his fortunate audacity in measuring himself, while a mere apprentice, against the first military leader living had been crowned with wonderful success. He had nailed the stadholder fast to the island of Cadzand, while he was perfecting his arrangements and building boats on the Rhine; he had propounded riddles which Maurice had spent three of the best campaigning months in idle efforts to guess, and when he at last moved, he had swept to his mark with the swiftness and precision of a bird of prey. Yet the greatest of all qualities in a military commander, that of deriving substantial fruits from victory instead of barren trophies, he had not manifested. If it had been a great stroke of art to seize Lingen before Maurice could reach Deventer, it was an enormous blunder, worthy of a journeyman soldier, to fail to seize the Bourtange marshes, and drive his sword into the very vitals of the republic, thus placed at his mercy.

Meantime, while there had been all these rejoicings and tribulations at the great doings on the Rhine and the shortcoming in Friesland, the real operations of the war had been at the antipodes.

It is not a very unusual phenomenon in history that the events, upon whose daily development the contemporary

[58] Gallucci, ii. 253, *seqq.*

world hangs with most palpitating interest, are far inferior in permanent influence upon the general movement of humanity to a series of distant and apparently commonplace transactions.

Empires are built up or undermined by the ceaseless industry of obscure multitudes often slightly observed, or but dimly comprehended.

Battles and sieges, dreadful marches, eloquent debates, intricate diplomacy—from time to time but only perhaps at rare intervals—have decided or modified the destiny of nations, while very often the clash of arms, the din of rhetoric, the whiz of political spindles, produce nothing valuable for human consumption, and made the world no richer.

If the age of heroic and religious passion was rapidly fading away before the gradual uprising of a politico-mercantile civilization—as it certainly was—the most vital events, those in which the fate of coming generations was most deeply involved, were those inspired by the spirit of commercial enterprise.

Nor can it be denied that there is often a genial and poetic essence even among things practical or of almost vulgar exterior. In those early expeditions of the Hollanders to the flaming lands of the equator there is a rhythm and romance of historical movement not less significant than in their unexampled defence of fatherland and of the world's liberty against the great despotism of the age.

Universal monarchy was baffled by the little republic, not within its own populous cities only, or upon its own barren sands. The long combat between Freedom and Absolutism had now become as wide as the world. The greatest European states had been dragged by the iron chain of necessity into a conflict from which they often struggled to escape, and on every ocean, and on almost every foot of soil, where the footsteps of mankind had as yet been imprinted, the fierce encounters were every day renewed. In the east and the west, throughout that great vague new world, of which geographers had hardly yet made a sketch, which comprised

both the Americas and something called the East Indies, and which Spain claimed as her private property, those humbly born and energetic adventurers were rapidly creating a symmetrical system out of most dismal chaos.

The King of Spain warned all nations from trespassing upon those outlying possessions.

His edicts had not however prevented the English in moderate numbers, and the Hollanders in steadily increasing swarms, from enlarging and making profitable use of these new domains of the world's commerce.

The days were coming when the People was to have more to say than the pope in regard to the disposition and arrangements of certain large districts of this planet. While the world-empire, which still excited so much dismay, was yielding to constant corrosion, another empire, created by well-directed toil and unflinching courage, was steadily rising out of the depths. It has often been thought amazing that the little republic should so long and so triumphantly withstand the enormous forces brought forward for her destruction. It was not, however, so very surprising. Foremost among nations, and in advance of the age, the republic had found the strength which comes from the spirit of association. On a wider scale than ever before known, large masses of men, with their pecuniary means, had been intelligently banded together to advance material interests. When it is remembered that, in addition to this force, the whole commonwealth was inspired by the divine influence of liberty, her power will no longer seem so wonderful.

A sinister event in the Isle of Ceylon had opened the series of transactions in the East, and had cast a gloom over the public sentiment at home. The enterprising voyager, Sebald de Weerdt, one of the famous brotherhood of the Invincible Lion which had wintered in the straits of Magellan,[59] had been murdered through the treachery of the King of Candy. His countrymen had not taken vengeance on his assassins. They were perhaps too fearful of losing their growing trade

[59] Vol. iii. page 579 of this History.

in those lucrative regions to take a becoming stand in that emergency. They were also not as yet sufficiently powerful there.[60]

The East India Company had sent out in May of this year its third fleet of eleven large ships, besides some smaller vessels, under the general superintendence of Matelieff de Jonghe, one of the directors. The investments for the voyage amounted to more than nineteen hundred thousand florins.[61]

Meantime the preceding adventurers under Stephen van der Hagen, who had sailed at the end of 1603, had been doing much thorough work.[62] A firm league had been made with one of the chief potentates of Malabar, enabling them to build forts and establish colonies in perpetual menace of Goa, the great oriental capital of the Portuguese. The return of the ambassadors sent out from Astgen to Holland had filled not only the island of Sumatra but the Moluccas, and all the adjacent regions, with praises of the power, wealth, and high civilization of that distant republic so long depicted by rivals as a nest of uncouth and sanguinary savages.[63] The fleet now proceeded to Amboyna, a stronghold of the Spanish-Portuguese, and the seat of a most lucrative trade.

On the arrival of those foreign well-armed ships under the guns of the fortress, the governor sent to demand, with Castilian arrogance, who the intruders were, and by whose authority and with what intent they presumed to show themselves in those waters. The reply was that they came in the name and by the authority of their High Mightinesses the States-General, and their stadholder the Prince of Orange; that they were sworn enemies of the King of Spain and all his subjects, and that as to their intent, this would soon be made apparent.[64] Whereupon, without much more ado, they began a bombardment of the fort, which mounted thirty-six guns. The governor, as often happened in those regions, being less valiant against determined European foes than towards the

[60] Wagenaar, ix. 197. Meteren, books xxvi. xxviii.
[61] Wagenaar, Meteren, *loc. cit.*
[62] Wagenaar, ix. 198
[63] Ibid. Grotius, xv. 700, *seqq.*
[64] Grotius, xv. 702.

feebler oriental races on which he had been accustomed to trample, succumbed with hardly an effort at resistance.[65] The castle and town and whole island were surrendered to the fleet, and thenceforth became virtually a colony of the republic with which, nominally, treaties of alliance and defence were negotiated. Thence the fleet, after due possession had been taken of these new domains, sailed partly to Banda and partly to two small but most important islands of the Moluccas.[66]

In that multitude of islands which make up the Eastern Archipelago there were but five at that period where grew the clove—Ternate, Tydor, Motiel, Makian, and Bacia.[67]

Pepper and ginger, even nutmegs, cassia, and mace, were but vulgar drugs, precious as they were already to the world and the world's commerce, compared with this most magnificent spice.

It is wonderful to reflect upon the strange composition of man. The world had lived in former ages very comfortably without cloves. But by the beginning of the seventeenth century that odoriferous pistil had been the cause of so many pitched battles and obstinate wars, of so much vituperation, negotiation, and intriguing, that the world's destiny seemed to have almost become dependent upon the growth of a particular gillyflower. Out of its sweetness had grown such bitterness among great nations as not torrents of blood could wash away. A commonplace condiment enough it seems to us now, easily to be dispensed with, and not worth purchasing at a thousand human lives or so the cargo, but it was once the great prize to be struggled for by civilized nations. From that fervid earth, warmed from within by volcanic heat, and basking ever beneath the equatorial sun, arose vapours as deadly to human life as the fruits were exciting and delicious to human senses. Yet the atmosphere of pestiferous fragrance had attracted rather than repelled. The poisonous delights of the climate, added to the perpetual and various warfare for

[65] Grotius, xv. 702. Wagenaar, ix. 197, 198.
[66] Ibid. Meteren, 537. [67] Grotius, *ubi sup.*

its productions, spread a strange fascination around those fatal isles.

Especially Ternate and Tydor were objects of unending strife. Chinese, Malays, Persians, Arabs, had struggled centuries long for their possession; those races successively or simultaneously ruling these and adjacent portions of the Archipelago. The great geographical discoveries at the close of the fifteenth century had however changed the aspect of India and of the world. The Portuguese adventurers found two rival kings in the two precious islands, and by ingeniously protecting one of these potentates and poisoning the other, soon made themselves masters of the field. The clove trade was now entirely in the hands of the strangers from the antipodes. Goa became the great mart of the lucrative traffic, and thither came Chinese, Arabs, Moors, and other oriental traders to be supplied from the Portuguese monopoly. Two-thirds of the spices however found their way directly to Europe.

Naturally enough, the Spaniards soon penetrated into these seas, and claimed their portion of the spice trade. They insisted that the coveted islands were included in their portion of the great Borgian grant. As there had hardly yet been time to make a trigonometrical survey of an unknown world, so generously divided by the pope, there was no way of settling disputed boundary questions save by apostolic blows. These were exchanged with much earnestness, year after year, between Spaniards, Portuguese, and all who came in their way. Especially the unfortunate natives, and their kings most of all, came in for a full share. At last Charles V. sold out his share of the spice islands to his Portuguese rival and co-proprietor, for three hundred and fifty thousand ducats.[68] The emperor's very active pursuits caused him to require ready money more than cloves. Yet John III. had made an excellent bargain, and the monopoly thenceforth brought him in at least two hundred thousand ducats annually. Goa became more flourishing, the natives

[68] Grotius, xv. 704.

more wretched, the Portuguese more detested than ever. Occasionally one of the royal line of victims would consent to put a diadem upon his head, but the coronation was usually the prelude to a dungeon or death. The treaties of alliance, which these unlucky potentates had formed with their powerful invaders, were, as so often is the case, mere deeds to convey themselves and their subjects into slavery.

Spain and Portugal becoming one, the slender weapon of defence which these weak but subtle Orientals sometimes employed with success—the international and commercial jealousy between their two oppressors—was taken away. It was therefore with joy that Zaida, who sat on the throne of Ternate at the end of the sixteenth century, saw the sails of a Dutch fleet arriving in his harbours.[69] Very soon negotiations were opened, and the distant republic undertook to protect the Mahometan king against his Catholic master. The new friendship was founded upon trade monopoly, of course, but at that period at least the islanders were treated with justice and humanity by their republican allies. The Dutch undertook to liberate their friends from bondage, while the King of Ternate, panting under Portuguese oppression, swore to have no traffic, no dealings of any kind, with any other nation than Holland ; not even with the English. The Dutch, they declared, were the liberators of themselves, of their friends, and of the seas.[70]

The international hatred, already germinating between England and Holland, shot forth in these flaming regions like a tropical plant. It was carefully nurtured and tended by both peoples. Freedom of commerce, freedom of the seas, meant that none but the Dutch East India Company—so soon as the Portuguese and Spaniards were driven out—should trade in cloves and nutmegs. Decrees to that effect were soon issued, under very heavy penalties, by the States-General to the citizens of the republic and to the world at large.[71] It was natural therefore that the English traders should hail the appearance of the

[69] Grotius, xv. 706.

[70] "Batavos vere socios ac suos marisque liberatores vocans."—Ibid. [71] Ibid.

Dutch fleets with much less enthusiasm than was shown by the King of Ternate.

On the other hand, the King of Tydor, persisting in his oriental hatred towards the rival potentate in the other island, allowed the Portuguese to build additional citadels, and generally to strengthen their positions within his dominions. Thus when Cornelius Sebastian, with his division of Ver Hagen's fleet, arrived in the Moluccas in the summer of 1605, he found plenty of work prepared for him. The peace recently concluded by James with Philip and the archdukes placed England in a position of neutrality in the war now waging in the clove islands between Spain and the republic's East India Company. The English in those regions were not slow to avail themselves of the advantage. The Portuguese of Tydor received from neutral sympathy a copious supply of powder and of pamphlets. The one explosive material enabled them to make a more effective defence of their citadel against the Dutch fleet; the other revealed to the Portuguese and their Mussulman allies that "the Netherlanders could not exist without English protection, that they were the scum of nations, and that if they should get possession of this clove monopoly, their insolence would become intolerable."[72] Samples of polite literature such as these, printed but not published, flew about in volleys. It was an age of pamphleteering, and neither the English nor the Dutch were behind their contemporaries in the science of attack and self-defence. Nevertheless Cornelius Sebastian was not deterred by paper pellets, nor by the guns of the citadel, from carrying out his purpose. It was arranged with King Zaida that the islanders of Ternate should make a demonstration against Tydor, being set across the strait in Dutch vessels. Sebastian, however, having little faith in oriental tenacity, entrusted the real work of storming the fortress to his own soldiers and sailors. On a fine morning in

[72] "Schrijvende seer verachtelijk ende schimpelijk vande Nederlanders als ofte sy sonder haer niet konden bestaen ende diergelijcke meer, die noemede het schuym van Natien die welcke soodiesen handel alleen handel hadden haer vermetelheit souden onlydelijk wesen," &c. — Depositions made by the Netherlanders. Meteren, 535vo.

May the assault was delivered in magnificent style. The resistance was obstinate; many of the assailants fell, and Captain Mol,[73] whom we have once before seen as master of the Tiger, sinking the galleys of Frederic Spinola off the Gat of Sluys, found himself at the head of only seven men within the interior defences of the citadel. A Spanish soldier, Torre by name, rushed upon him with a spear. Avoiding the blow, Mol grappled with his antagonist, and both rolled to the ground. A fortunate carbine-shot from one of the Dutch captain's comrades went through the Spaniard's head.[74] Meantime the little band, so insignificant in numbers, was driven out of the citadel. Mol fell to the ground with a shattered leg, and reproached his companions, who sought to remove him, for neglecting their work in order to save his life. Let them take the fort, he implored them, and when that was done they might find leisure to pick him up if they chose.[75] While he was speaking the principal tower of the fortress blew up, and sixty of the garrison were launched into the air.[76] A well-directed shot had set fire to the magazine. The assault was renewed with fresh numbers, and the Dutch were soon masters of the place. Never was a stronghold more audaciously or more successfully stormed. The garrison surrendered. The women and children, fearing to be at the mercy of those who had been depicted to them as cannibals, had already made their escape, and were scrambling like squirrels among the volcanic cliffs. Famine soon compelled them to come down, however, when they experienced sufficiently kind treatment, but were all deported in Dutch vessels to the Philippine islands.[77] The conquerors not only spared the life of the King of Tydor, but permitted him to retain his crown. At his request the citadel was razed to the ground. It would have been better perhaps to let it stand, and it was possible that in the heart of the vanquished potentate some vengeance was lurking which might bear evil

[73] I suppose at least this Captain Mol to have been identical with the gallant seaman who commanded the Tiger in that action.

[74] Grotius, xv. 706, 707.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

fruit at a later day. Meantime the Portuguese were driven entirely out of the Moluccas, save the island of Timos, where they still retained a not very important citadel.[78]

The East India Company was now in possession of the whole field. The Moluccas and the clove trade were its own, and the Dutch republic had made manifest to the world that more potent instruments had now been devised for parcelling out the new world than papal decrees, although signed by the immaculate hand of a Borgia.

During the main operations already sketched in the Netherlands, and during those vastly more important oriental movements to which the reader's attention has just been called, a detached event or two deserves notice.

Twice during the summer campaign of this year Du Terrail, an enterprising French refugee in the service of the archdukes, had attempted to surprise the important city of Bergen-op-Zoom. On the 21st August the intended assault had been discovered in time to prevent any very serious conflict on either side. On the 20th September the experiment was renewed at an hour after midnight. Du Terrail, having arranged the attack at three different points, had succeeded in forcing his way across the moat and through one of the gates. The trumpets of the foremost Spaniards already sounded in the streets. It was pouring with rain ; the town was pitch dark. But the energetic Paul Bax was governor of the place, a man who was awake at any hour of the twenty-four, and who could see in the darkest night. He had already informed himself of the enemy's project, and had strengthened his garrison by a large intermixture of the most trustworthy burgher guards, so that the advance of Du Terrail at the southern gate was already confronted by a determined band. A fierce battle began in the darkness. Meantime Paul Bax, galloping through the city, had aroused the whole population for the defence. At the Steinberg gate, where the chief assault had been pre-

21 Aug.

20 Sept.

[78] Grotius, xv. 700–708. Compare Meteren, 535–537. Wagenaar, ix. 196–198. Van der Hagen Reise, 92, 94, 95.

pared, Bax had caused great fires of straw and pitch barrels to be lighted, so that the invaders, instead of finding, as they expected, a profound gloom through the streets, saw themselves approaching a brilliantly illuminated city, fully prepared to give their uninvited guests a warm reception. The garrison, the townspeople, even the women, thronged to the ramparts, saluting the Spaniards with a rain of bullets, paving-stones, and pitch hoops, and with a storm of gibes and taunts. They were asked why they allowed their cardinal thus to send them to the cattle market, and whether Our Lady of Hall, to whom Isabella was so fond of making pilgrimages, did not live rather too far off to be of much use just then to her or to them.[79] Catholics and Protestants all stood shoulder to shoulder that night to defend their firesides against the foreign foe, while mothers laid their sleeping children on the ground that they might fill their cradles with powder and ball, which they industriously brought to the soldiers. The less energetic women fell upon their knees in the street, and prayed aloud through the anxious night. The attack was splendidly repulsed. As morning dawned the enemy withdrew, leaving one hundred dead outside the walls or in the town, and carrying off thirty-eight wagon loads of wounded.[80] Du Terrail made no further attempts that summer, although the list of his surprises was not yet full. He was a good engineer, and a daring partisan officer. He was also inspired by an especial animosity to the States-General, who had refused the offer of his services before he made application to the archdukes.[81]

At sea there was no very important movement in European waters, save that Lambert Heinrichzoon, commonly called Pretty Lambert,[82] a Rotterdam skipper, whom we have seen doing good service in the sea-fights with Frederic Spinola, captured the admiral of the Dunkirk pirate fleet, Adrian Dirkzoon. It was a desperate fight. Pretty Lambert, sustained at a distance by Rear-Admiral Gerbrantzon, laid

[79] Grotius, xv. 667, 669. Meteren, 522, 523. Wagenaar, ix. 191, 192.
[80] Ibid. [81] Grotius, *ubi sup.* [82] "Mooi Lambert."—Wagenaar, ix. 196.

himself yard-arm to yard-arm alongside the pirate vessel, boarded her, and after beating down all resistance made prisoners such of the crew as remained alive, and carried them into Rotterdam. Next day they were hanged, to the number of sixty. A small number were pardoned on account of their youth, and a few individuals who effected their escape when led to the gallows, were not pursued.[83] The fact that the townspeople almost connived at the escape of these desperadoes showed that there had been a surfeit of hangings in Rotterdam. It is moreover not easy to distinguish with exactness the lines which in those days separated regular sea belligerents, privateers, and pirates from each other. It had been laid down by the archdukes that there was no military law at sea, and that sick soldiers captured on the water should be hanged. Accordingly they were hanged.[84] Admiral Fazardo, of the Spanish royal navy, not only captured all the enemy's merchant vessels which came in his way, but hanged, drowned, and burned alive every man found on board.[85] Admiral Haultain, of the republican navy, had just been occupied in drowning a whole regiment of Spanish soldiers, captured in English and German transports. The complaints brought against the English cruisers by the Hollanders for capturing and confiscating their vessels, and hanging, maiming, and torturing their crews—not only when England was neutral, but even when she was the ally of the republic—had been a standing topic for diplomatic discussion, and almost a standing joke. Why, therefore, these Dunkirk sea-rovers should not on the same principle be allowed to rush forth from their very convenient den to plunder friend and foe, burn ships, and butcher the sailors at pleasure, seems difficult to understand. To expect from the inhabitants of this robbers' cave—this "church on the downs"—a code of maritime law so much purer and sterner than the system adopted by the English, the Spaniards, and the Dutch, was hardly reasonable. Certainly the Dunkirkers, who were mainly

[83] Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* Meteren, 524ᵛᵒ. [84] Vide *supra*, p. 125.
[85] "Quarum nautæ mersi, suspensi, exusti."—Grotius, xv. 685.

Netherlanders—rebels to the republic and partisans of the Spanish crown—did their best to destroy the herring fishery and to cut the throats of the fishermen, but perhaps they received the halter more often than other mariners who had quite as thoroughly deserved it. And this at last appeared the prevailing opinion in Rotterdam.

CHAPTER XLV.

Preparations for the campaign of 1606—Diminution of Maurice's popularity—Quarrel between the pope and the Venetian republic—Surprise of Sluys by Du Terrail—Dilatoriness of the republic's operations—Movements of Spinola—Influence of the weather on the military transactions of the year—Endeavours of Spinola to obtain possession of the Waal and Yssel—Surrender of Lochem to Spinola—Siege of Groll—Siege and loss of Rheinberg—Mutiny in the Catholic army—Recovery of Lochem by Maurice—Attempted recovery of Groll—Sudden appearance of the enemy—Withdrawal of the besieging army—Close of the campaign—End of the war of independence—Motives of the Prince in his actions before Groll—Cruise of Admiral Haultain to the coast of Spain and Portugal—His encounter with the war-ships of Fazardo—Courageous conduct of the vice-admiral—Deaths of Justus Lipsius, Hohenlo, and Count John of Nassau.

AFTER the close of the campaign of 1605 Spinola had gone once more to Spain. On his passage through Paris he had again been received with distinguished favour by that warm ally of the Dutch republic, Henry IV., and on being questioned by that monarch as to his plans for the next campaign had replied that he intended once more to cross the Rhine, and invade Friesland. Henry, convinced that the Genoese would of course not tell him the truth on such an occasion, wrote accordingly to the States-General that they might feel safe as to their eastern frontier. Whatever else might happen, Friesland and the regions adjacent would be safe next year from attack.[1] The immediate future was to show whether the subtle Italian had not compassed as neat a deception by telling the truth as coarser politicians could do by falsehood.

Spinola found the royal finances in most dismal condition. Three hundred thousand dollars a month[2] were the least estimate of the necessary expenses for carrying on the

[1] Gallucci, 256, 257.

[2] Bentivoglio, 538. Grotius. xv. 714.

Netherland war, a sum which could not possibly be spared by Lerma, Uceda, the Marquis of the Seven Churches, and other financiers then industriously occupied in draining dry the exchequer for their own uses. Once more the general aided his sovereign with purse and credit, as well as with his sword. Once more the exchange at Genoa was glutted with the acceptances of Marquis Spinola.[3] Here at least was a man of a nature not quite so depraved as that of the parasites bred out of the corruption of a noble but dying commonwealth, and doubtless it was with gentle contempt that the great favourite and his friends looked at the military and financial enthusiasm of the volunteer. It was so much more sagacious to make a princely fortune than to sacrifice one already inherited, in the service of one's country.

Spinola being thus ready not only to fight but to help to pay for the fighting, found his plans of campaigns received with great benignity by the king and his ministers. Meantime there was much delay. The enormous labours thus devolved upon one pair of shoulders by the do-nothing king and a mayor of the palace whose soul was absorbed by his own private robberies, were almost too much for human strength. On his return to the Netherlands Spinola fell dangerously ill in Genoa.[4]

Meantime, during his absence and the enforced idleness of the Catholic armies, there was an opportunity for the republicans to act with promptness and vigour. They displayed neither quality. Never had there been so much sluggishness as in the preparations for the campaign of 1606. The States' exchequer was lower than it had been for years. The republic was without friends. Left to fight their battle for national existence alone, the Hollanders found themselves perpetually subjected to hostile censure from their late allies, and to friendly advice still more intolerable. There were many brave Englishmen and Frenchmen sharing in the fatigues of the Dutch war of independence, but the govern-

[3] Grot. xv. 680. Compare Gallucci, lib. xviii.-xx. [4] Gallucci, ii. 257, *seqq.*

ments of Henry and of James were as protective, as severely virtuous, as offensive, and, in their secret intrigues with the other belligerent, as mischievous as it was possible for the best-intentioned neutrals to be.

The fame and the popularity of the stadholder had been diminished by the results of the past campaign. The States-General were disappointed, dissatisfied, and inclined to censure very unreasonably the public servant who had always obeyed their decrees with docility. While Henry IV. was rapidly transferring his admiration from Maurice to Spinola, the disagreements at home between the Advocate and the Stadholder were becoming portentous.

There was a want of means and of soldiers for the new campaign. Certain causes were operating in Europe to the disadvantage of both belligerents. In the south, Venice had almost drawn her sword against the pope in her settled resolution to put down the Jesuits and to clip the wings of the church party, before, with bequests and donations, votive churches and magnificent monasteries, four-fifths of the domains of the republic should fall into mortmain, as was already the case in Brabant.[5]

Naturally there was a contest between the ex-Huguenot, now eldest son of the Church, and the most Catholic king, as to who should soonest defend the pope. Henry offered thorough protection to his Holiness, but only under condition that he should have a monopoly of that protection.[6] He lifted his sword, but meantime it was doubtful whether the blow was to descend upon Venice or upon Spain. The Spanish levies, on their way to the Netherlands, were detained in Italy by this new exigency. The States-General offered the sister republic their maritime assistance, and notwithstanding their own immense difficulties, stood ready

[5] Meteren, 536.

[6] "Nec dissimulabat Hispanus Pontifici se auxilio futurum, quo Gallus comperto significavit Romam, ita meritos majores suos ut ecclesiæ pericula non alias magis quam Francicas manus respicere deberent: sin Pontifex Hispanum prolatandæ dominationis avidum sibi assumeret haud immerito suspectum id sibi vel coactum contrariis in partibus fore."—Grotius, xv. 713. Compare Meteren, 546vo.

to send a fleet to the Mediterranean. The offer was gratefully declined, and the quarrel with the pope arranged, but the incident laid the foundation of a lasting friendship between the only two important republics then existing.[7] The issue of the Gunpowder Plot, at the close of the preceding year, had confirmed James in his distaste for Jesuits, and had effected that which all the eloquence of the States-General and their ambassador had failed to accomplish, the prohibition of Spanish enlistments in his kingdom. Guido Fawkes had served under the archduke in Flanders.

Here then were delays additional to that caused by Spinola's[8] illness. On the other hand, the levies of the republic were for a season paralysed by the altercation, soon afterwards adjusted, between Henry IV. and the Duke of Bouillon, brother-in-law of the stadholder and of the Palatine, and by the petty war between the Duke and Hanseatic city of Brunswick, in which Ernest of Nassau was for a time employed.[9]

During this period of almost suspended animation the war gave no signs of life, except in a few spasmodic efforts on the part of the irrepressible Du Terrail. Early in the spring, not satisfied with his double and disastrous repulse before Bergen-op-Zoom, that partisan now determined to surprise Sluys. That an attack was impending became known to the governor of that city, the experienced Colonel Van der Noot. Not dreaming, however, that any mortal—even the most audacious of Frenchmen and adventurers—would ever think of carrying a city like Sluys by surprise, defended as it was by a splendid citadel and by a whole chain of forts and water-batteries, and capable of withstanding three months long, as it had so recently done, a siege in form by the acknowledged master of the beleaguering science, the methodical governor went calmly to bed one fine night in June. His slumbers were disturbed before morning by the sound of trumpets sounding Spanish melodies in the streets, and by a great

[7] Grotius, xv. 684. Wagenaar, ix. 206. Meteren, 536.
[8] Meteren, 526. [9] Wagenaar, ix. 199-203.

uproar and shouting. Springing out of bed, he rushed half-dressed to the rescue. Less vigilant than Paul Bax had been the year before in Bergen, he found that Du Terrail had really effected a surprise. At the head of twelve hundred Walloons and Irishmen, that enterprising officer had waded through the drowned land of Cadzand, with the promised support of a body of infantry under Frederic Van den Berg, from Damm, had stolen noiselessly by the forts of that island unchallenged and unseen, had effected with petards a small breach through the western gate of the city, and with a large number of his followers, creeping two and two through the gap, had found himself for a time master of Sluys.[10]

The profound silence of the place had however somewhat discouraged the intruders. The whole population were as sound asleep as was the excellent commandant, but the stillness in the deserted streets suggested an ambush, and they moved stealthily forward, feeling their way with caution towards the centre of the town.

It so happened, moreover, that the sacristan had forgotten to wind up the great town clock. The agreement with the party first entering and making their way to the opposite end of the city, had been that at the striking of a certain hour after midnight they should attack simultaneously and with a great outcry all the guardhouses, so that the garrison might be simultaneously butchered. The clock never struck, the signal was never given, and Du Terrail and his immediate comrades remained near the western gate, suspicious and much perplexed. The delay was fatal. The guard, the whole garrison, and the townspeople flew to arms, and half-naked, but equipped with pike and musket, and led on by Van der Noot in person, fell upon the intruders. A panic took the place of previous audacity in the breasts of Du Terrail's followers. Thinking only of escape, they found the gap by which they had crept into the town much less convenient as a means of egress in the face of an infuriated multitude. Five hundred of them were put to death in a

[10] Grotius, xv. 687, *seqq.* Wagenaar, ix. 207, *seqq.*

very few minutes. Almost as many were drowned or suffocated in the marshes, as they attempted to return by the road over which they had come. A few stragglers of the fifteen hundred were all that were left to tell the tale.[11] June, 1606.

It would seem scarcely worth while to chronicle such trivial incidents in this great war—the all-absorbing drama of Christendom—were it not that they were for the moment the whole war. It might be thought that hostilities were approaching their natural termination, and that the war was dying of extreme old age, when the Quixotic pranks of a Du Terrail occupied so large a part of European attention. The winter had passed, another spring had come and gone, and Maurice had in vain attempted to obtain sufficient means from the States to take the field in force. Henry, looking on from the outside, was becoming more and more exasperated with the dilatoriness which prevented the republic from profiting by the golden moments of Spinola's enforced absence.[12] Yet the best that could be done seemed to be to take measures for defensive operations.

Spinola never reached Brussels until the beginning of June, yet, during all the good campaigning weather which had been fleeting away, not a blow had been struck, nor a wholesome counsel taken by the stadholder or the States. It was midsummer before the armies were in the field. The plans of the Catholic general however then rapidly developed themselves. Having assembled as large a force as had ever been under his command, he now divided it into two nearly equal portions. Bucquoy, with ten thousand foot, twelve hundred cavalry, and twelve guns, arrived on the 18th July at Mook, on the Meuse. Spinola, with eleven thousand infantry, two thousand horse, and eight guns, crossed the Rhine at the old redoubts of Ruhrort, and on the same 18th July took position at Goor, in Overyssel.[13] The first

[11] Wagenaar, ix. 207, *seqq.*

[12] Van der Kemp, ii. 117, 520.

[13] For the campaign of 1606 compare Grotius, xv. 689–699. Meteren, 537–543. Bentivoglio, 539–546. Van der Kemp, ii. 117–120, and notes. Wagenaar, ix 209–220.

plan of the commander-in-chief was to retrace exactly his campaign of the previous year, even as he had with so much frankness stated to Henry. But the republic, although deserted by her former friends, and looked upon askance by the monarch of Britain, and by the most Christian king, had this year a most efficient ally in the weather. Jupiter Pluvius had descended from on high to the rescue of the struggling commonwealth, and his decrees were omnipotent as to the course of the campaign. The seasons that year seemed all fused into one. It was difficult to tell on mid-summer day whether it were midwinter, spring, or autumn.[14] The rain came down day after day, week after week, as if the contending armies and the very country which was to be invaded and defended were to be all washed out of existence together.[15] Friesland resolved itself into a vast quagmire; the roads became fluid, the rivers lakes. Spinola turned his face from the east, and proceeded to carry out a second plan which he had long meditated, and even a more effective one, in the west.

The Waal and the Yssel formed two sides of a great quadrilateral, and furnished for the natural fortress, thus enclosed, two vast and admirable moats. Within lay Good-meadow and Foul-meadow—Bet-uwe and Vel-uwe—one, the ancient Batavian island which from time immemorial had given its name to the commonwealth, the other, the once dismal swamp which toil and intelligence had in the course of centuries transformed into the wealthy and flowery land of Gueldres.

Beyond, but in immediate proximity, lay the ancient episcopal city and province of Utrecht, over which lay the road to the adjacent Holland and Zeeland. The very heart of the republic would be laid bare to the conqueror's sword if he could once force the passage, and obtain the control of these two protecting streams. With Utrecht as his base, and all Brabant and Flanders — obedient provinces — at his back, Spinola might accomplish more in one season than Alva

[14] Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.* [15] Bentivoglio, Grotius, Meteren, *ubi sup*

Don John, and Alexander Farnese had compassed in forty years, and destroy at a blow what was still called the Netherland rebellion. The passage of the rivers once effected, the two enveloping wings would fold themselves together, and the conquest would be made.

Thus reasoned the brilliant young general, and his projects, although far-reaching, did not seem wild. The first steps were, however, the most important as well as the most difficult, and he had to reckon with a wary and experienced antagonist. Maurice had at last collected and reviewed at Arnhem an army of nearly fifteen thousand men, and was now watching closely from Doesburg and Deventer every movement of the foe.

Having been forced to a defensive campaign, in which he was not likely at best to gain many additional laurels, he was the more determined to lay down his own life, and sacrifice every man he could bring into the field, before Spinola should march into the cherished domains of Utrecht and Holland. Meantime the rain, which had already exerted so much influence on the military movements of the year, still maintained the supremacy over human plans. The Yssel and the Waal, always deep, broad, sluggish, but dangerous rivers—the Rhine in its old age—were swollen into enormous proportions, their currents flowing for the time with the vigour of their far away youth.

Maurice had confided the defence of the Waal to Warner Du Bois, under whose orders he placed a force of about seven thousand men, and whose business it was to prevent Bucquoy's passage. His own task was to baffle Spinola.[16]

Bucquoy's ambition was to cross the Waal at a point as near as possible to the fork of that stream with the true Rhine, seize the important city of Nymegen, and then give the hand to Spinola, so soon as he should be on the other side of the Yssel. At the village of Spardorp or Kekerdom, he employed Pompeio Giustiniani to make a desperate effort, having secured a large number of barges in which he em-

[16] Meteren, Bentivoglio, Grotius, Wagenaar, Van der Kemp, *ubi sup.*

barked his troops. As the boatmen neared the opposite bank, however, they perceived that Warner Du Bois had made effective preparations for their reception. They lost heart, and on pretence that the current of the river was too rapid to allow them to reach the point proposed for their landing, gradually dropped down the stream, and, in spite of the remonstrances of the commanders, pushed their way back to the shore which they had left. From that time forth, the States' troops, in efficient numbers, fringed the inner side of the Waal, along the whole length of the Batavian island, while armed vessels of the republic patrolled the stream itself. In vain Count Bucquoy watched an opportunity, either by surprise or by main strength, to effect a crossing. The Waal remained as impassable as if it were a dividing ocean.[17]

On the other side of the quadrilateral, Maurice's dispositions were as effective as those of his lieutenant on the Waal. The left shore of the Yssel, along its whole length, from Arnhem and Doesburg quite up to Zwoll and Campen, where the river empties itself into the Zuyder Zee, was now sprinkled thickly with forts, hastily thrown up, but strong enough to serve the temporary purpose of the stadholder. In vain the fleet-footed and audacious Spinola moved stealthily or fiercely to and fro, from one point to another, seeking an opening through which to creep, or a weak spot where he might dash himself against the chain. The whole line was securely guarded. The swollen river, the redoubts, and the musketeers of Maurice, protected the heart of the republic from the impending danger.

Wearied of this fruitless pacing up and down, Spinola, while apparently intending an assault upon Deventer, and thus attracting his adversary's attention to that important city, suddenly swerved to the right, and came down upon Lochem.

23 July. The little town, with its very slender garrison, surrendered at once. It was not a great conquest, but it might possibly be of use in the campaign. It was taken before

[17] Authorities last cited.

the stadholder could move a step to its assistance, even had he deemed it prudent to leave Yssel-side for an hour. The summer was passing away, the rain was still descending, and it was the 1st of August before Spinola left Lochem. He then made a rapid movement to the north, between Zwoll and Hasselt, endeavouring to cross the Blackwater, and seize Geelmuyden, on the Zuyder Zee. Had he succeeded, he might have turned Maurice's position. But the works in that direction had been entrusted to an experienced campaigner, Warmelo, sheriff of Zalant, who received the impetuous Spinola and his lieutenant, Count Solre, so warmly, that they reeled backwards at last, after repeated assaults and great loss of men, and never more attempted to cross the Yssel.[18] 2 August.

Obviously, the campaign had failed. Utrecht and Holland were as far out of the Catholic general's reach as the stars in the sky, but at least, with his large armies, he could earn a few trophies, barren or productive, as it might prove, before winter, uniting with the deluge, should drive him from the field.

On the 3rd August, he laid siege to Groll (or Groenlo), a fortified town of secondary importance in the country of Zutphen, and, squandering his men with much recklessness, in his determination not to be baffled, reduced the place in eleven days. Here he paused for a breathing spell, and then, renouncing all his schemes upon the inner defences of the republic, withdrew once more to the Rhine and laid siege to Rheinberg.[19] 3-14 Aug. 22 Aug.

This frontier place had been tossed to and fro so often between the contending parties in the perpetual warfare, that its inhabitants must have learned to consider themselves rather as a convenient circulating medium for military operations than as burghers who had any part in the ordinary business of life. It had old-fashioned defences of stone, which, during the recent occupation by the States, had been much improved, and had been strengthened with earthworks.

[18] Ibid. [19] Ibid.

Before it was besieged, Maurice sent his brother Frederic Henry, with some picked companies, into the place, so that the garrison amounted to three thousand effective men.

The Prince de Soubise, brother of the Duc de Rohan, and other French volunteers of quality, also threw themselves into the place, in order to take lessons in the latest methods of attack and defence.[20] It was now admitted that no more accomplished pupil of the stadholder in the beleaguering art had appeared in Europe than his present formidable adversary. On this occasion, however, there was no great display of science. Maurice obstinately refused to move to the relief of the place, despite all the efforts of a deputation of the States-General who visited his camp in September, urging him strenuously to take the chances of a stricken field.[21]

26 Sept.

Nothing could induce the stadholder, who held an observing position at Wesel, with his back against the precious watery quadrilateral, to risk the defence of those most vital lines of the Yssel and the Waal. While attempting to save Rheinberg, he felt it possible that he might lose Nymegen, or even Utrecht. The swift but wily Genoese was not to be trifled with or lost sight of an instant. The road to Holland might still be opened, and the destiny of the republic might hang on the consequences of a single false move. That destiny, under God, was in his hands alone, and no chance of winning laurels, even from his greatest rival's head, could induce him to shrink from the path of duty, however obscure it might seem. There were a few brilliant assaults and sorties, as in all sieges, the French volunteers especially distinguishing themselves; but the place fell at the end of forty days. The garrison marched out with the honours of war. In the modern practice, armies were rarely captured in strongholds, nor were the defenders, together with the population, butchered.

2 Oct.

The loss, after a six weeks' siege, of Rheinberg, which six years before, with far inferior fortifications, had held out a

[20] Wagenaar, ix. 214, 215. [21] Van der Kemp, ii. 120.

much longer time against the States, was felt as a bitter disappointment throughout the republic. Frederic Henry, on leaving the place, made a feeble and unsuccessful demonstration against Venlo, by which the general dissatisfaction was not diminished. Soon afterwards, the war became more languid than ever. News arrived of a great crisis on the Genoa exchange. A multitude of merchants, involved in pecuniary transactions with Spinola, fell with one tremendous crash. The funds of the Catholic commander-in-chief were already exhausted, his acceptances could no longer be negotiated.[22] His credit was becoming almost as bad as the king's own. The inevitable consequence of the want of cash and credit followed. Mutiny, for the first time in Spinola's administration, raised its head once more, and stalked about defiant. Six hundred veterans marched to Breda, and offered their services to Justinus of Nassau. The proposal was accepted.[23] Other bands established their quarters in different places, chose their Elettos and lesser officers, and enacted the scenes which have been so often depicted in these pages. The splendid army of Spinola melted like April snow. By the last week of October there hardly seemed a Catholic army in the field. The commander-in-chief had scattered such companies as could still be relied upon in the villages of the friendly archiepiscopate of Cologne, and had obtained, not by murders and blackmail—according to the recent practice of the Admiral of Arragon, at whose grim name the whole country-side still shuddered—but from the friendship of the leading inhabitants and by honest loans, a sufficient sum to put bread into the mouths of the troops still remaining faithful to him.[24]

The opportunity had at last arrived for the stadholder to strike a blow before the season closed. Bankruptcy and mutiny had reduced his enemy to impotence in the very season of his greatest probable success. On the 24th October Maurice came before Lochem, which he recaptured in five days. Next in the order of Spinola's victo- 24 Oct.

[22] Grotius, xv. 696, 697.
[23] Grotius, Bentivoglio, Meteren, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* [24] Ibid.

ries was Groll, which the stadholder at once besieged. He had almost fifteen thousand infantry and three thousand horse.[25] A career of brief triumph before winter should close in upon those dripping fields, seemed now assured. But the rain, which during nearly the whole campaign had been his potent ally, had of late been playing him false. The swollen Yssel, during a brief period of dry weather, had sunk so low in certain shallows as not to be navigable for his transports,[26] and after his trains of artillery and munitions had been dragged wearily overland as far as Groll, the deluge had returned in such force, that physical necessity as well as considerations of humanity compelled him to defer his entrenching operations until the weather should moderate. As there seemed no further danger to be apprehended from the broken, mutinous, and dispersed forces of the enemy, the siege operations were conducted in a leisurely manner. What was the astonishment, therefore, among the soldiers, when a rumour flew about the camp in the early days of November that the indomitable Spinola was again advancing upon them![27] It was perfectly true. With extraordinary perseverance he had gathered up six or seven thousand infantry and twelve companies of horse—all the remnants of the splendid armies with which he had taken the field at midsummer—and was now marching to the relief of Groll, besieged as it was by a force at least doubly as numerous as his own. It was represented to the stadholder, however, that an impassable morass lay between him and the enemy,[28] and that there would therefore be time enough to complete his entrenchments before Spinola could put his foolhardy attempt into execution. But the Catholic general, marching faster than rumour itself, had crossed the impracticable swamp almost before a spadeful of earth had been turned in the republican camp. His advance was in sight even while the incredulous were sneering at the absurdity of his supposed project. Informed by scouts of the weakest point in the stadholder's extended lines, Spinola was

[25] Grotius, xv. 698. [26] Letter of Prince Maurice, in Van der Kemp, ii. 545.
[27] Authorities cited. [28] Van der Kemp, ii. 21.

directing himself thither with beautiful precision.[29] Maurice hastily contracted both his wings, and concentrated himself in the village of Lebel. At last the moment had come for a decisive struggle. There could be little doubt of the result. All the advantage was with the republican army. The Catholics had arrived in front of the enemy fatigued by forced marches through quagmires, in horrible weather, over roads deemed impassable. The States' troops were fresh, posted on ground of their own choosing, and partially entrenched. To the astonishment, even to the horror of the most eager portion of the army, the stadholder deliberately, and despite the groans of his soldiers, refused the combat, and gave immediate orders for raising the siege and abandoning the field.[30]

On the 12th of November he broke up his camp and withdrew to a village called Zelem. On the same day the marquis, having relieved the city, without paying the expected price, retired in another direction, and established what was left of his army in the province of Munster. The campaign was closed.[31] And thus the great war, which had run its stormy course for nearly forty years, dribbled out of existence, sinking away that rainy November in the dismal fens of Zutphen. The long struggle for independence had come, almost unperceived, to an end. 12 Nov.

Peace had not arrived, but the work of the armies was over for many a long year. Freedom and independence were secured. A deed or two, never to be forgotten by Netherland hearts, was yet to be done on the ocean, before the long and intricate negotiations for peace should begin, and the weary people permit themselves to rejoice; but the prize was already won.

Meantime, the conduct of Prince Maurice in these last days of the campaign was the subject of biting censure by friend and foe. The military fame of Spinola throughout Europe grew apace, and the fame of his great rival seemed to shrink in the same proportion.

[29] Grotius, xv. 699. [30] Authorities cited. [31] Ibid.

Henry of France was especially indignant at what he considered the shortcomings of the republic and of its chief. Already, before the close of the summer, the agent Aerssens had written from Paris that his Majesty was very much displeased with Spinola's prosperity, ascribing it to the want of good councils on the part of the States' Government that so fine an army should lie idle so long, without making an attempt to relieve the beleaguered places, so that Spinola felt assured of taking anything as soon as he made his appearance. "Your Mightinesses cannot believe," continued the agent, "what a trophy is made by the Spanish ministers out of these little exploits, and they have so much address at this court, that if such things continue they may produce still greater results."[32]

In December he wrote that the king was so malcontent concerning the siege of Groll as to make it impossible to answer him with arguments, that he openly expressed regret at not having employed the money lent to the States upon strengthening his own frontiers, so distrustful was he of their capacity for managing affairs, and that he mentioned with disgust statements received from his ambassador at Brussels and from the Duc de Rohan, to the effect that Spinola had between five and six thousand men only at the relief of Groll, against twelve thousand in the stadholder's army.[33]

5 Dec.

The motives of the deeds and the omissions of the prince at this supreme moment must be pondered with great caution. The States-General had doubtless been inclined for vigorous movements, and Olden-Barneveld, with some of his colleagues, had visited the camp late in September to urge the relief of Rheinberg. Maurice was in daily correspondence with the Government, and regularly demanded their advice, by which, on many former occasions, he had bound himself, even when it was in conflict with his own better judgment.

But throughout this campaign, the responsibility was entirely, almost ostentatiously, thrown by the States-General

[32] Van der Kemp, ii. 549.

[33] Ibid. 550.

upon their commander-in-chief, and, as already indicated, their preparations in the spring and early summer had been entirely inadequate. Should he lose the army with which he had so quietly but completely checked Spinola in all his really important moves during the summer and autumn, he might despair of putting another very soon into the field. That his force in that November week before Groll was numerically far superior to the enemy is certain, but he had lost confidence in his cavalry since their bad behaviour at Mulheim the previous year, and a very large proportion of his infantry was on the sick-list at the moment of Spinola's approach. "Lest the continual bad weather should entirely consume the army," he said, "we are resolved, within a day or two after we have removed the sick who are here in great numbers, to break up, unless the enemy should give us occasion to make some attempt upon him."[31]

Maurice was the servant of a small republic, contending single-handed against an empire still considered the most formidable power in the world. His cue was not necessarily to fight on all occasions; for delay often fights better than an army against a foreign invader. When a battle and a victory were absolutely necessary we have seen the magnificent calmness which at Nieuport secured triumph under the shadow of death. Had he accepted Spinola's challenge in November, he would probably have defeated him and have taken Groll. He might not, however, have annihilated his adversary, who, even when worsted, would perhaps have effected his escape. The city was of small value to the republic. The principal advantage of a victory would have been increased military renown for himself. Viewed in this light, there is something almost sublime in the phlegmatic and perfectly republican composure with which he disdained laurels, easily enough, as it would seem, to have been acquired, and denied his soldiers the bloodshed and the suffering for which they were clamouring.

And yet, after thoroughly weighing and measuring all these circumstances, it is natural to regret that he did not on

[31] Letter of 9 November, 1606, in Van der Kemp, ii. 536.

that occasion rise upon Spinola and smite him to the earth. The Lord had delivered him into his hands. The chances of his own defeat were small, its probable consequences, should it occur, insignificant. It is hardly conceivable that he could have been so completely overthrown as to allow the Catholic commander to do in November what he had tried all summer in vain to accomplish, cross the Yssel and the Waal, with the dregs of his army, and invade Holland and Zeeland in midwinter, over the prostrate bodies of Maurice and all his forces. On the other hand, that the stadholder would have sent the enemy reeling back to his bogs, with hardly the semblance of an army at his heels, was almost certain. The effect of such a blow upon impending negotiations, and especially upon the impressible imagination of Henry and the pedantic shrewdness of James, would have been very valuable. It was not surprising that the successful soldier who sat on the French throne, and who had been ever ready to wager life and crown on the results of a stricken field, should be loud in his expressions of disapprobation and disgust. Yet no man knew better than the sagacious Gascon that fighting to win a crown, and to save a republic, were two essentially different things.

In the early summer of this year Admiral Haultain, whom we lately saw occupied with tossing Sarmiento's Spanish legion into the sea off the harbour of Dover, had been despatched to the Spanish coast on a still more important errand. The outward bound Portuguese merchantmen and the home returning fleets from America, which had been absent nearly two years, might be fallen in with at any moment, in the latitude of 36°-38°. The admiral, having received orders, therefore, to cruise carefully in those regions, sailed for the shores of Portugal with a squadron of twenty-four war-ships. His expedition was not very successful. He picked up a prize or two here and there, and his presence on the coast prevented the merchant-fleet from sailing out of Lisbon for the East Indies, the merchandise already on board being disembarked and the voyage postponed to a more favourable opportunity.

He saw nothing, however, of the long-expected ships from the golden West Indies—as Mexico, Peru, and Brazil were then indiscriminately called—and after parting company with six of his own ships, which were dispersed and damaged in a gale, and himself suffering from a dearth of provisions, he was forced to return without much gain or glory.[35]

In the month of September he was once more despatched on the same service. He had nineteen war-galleots of the first class, and two yachts, well equipped and manned.[36] Vice-admiral of the fleet was Regnier Klaaszoon (or Nicholson), of Amsterdam, a name which should always be held fresh in remembrance, not only by mariners and Netherlanders, but by all men whose pulses can beat in sympathy with practical heroism.

The admiral coasted deliberately along the shores of Spain and Portugal. It seemed impossible that the golden fleets, which, as it was ascertained, had not yet arrived, could now escape the vigilance of the Dutch cruisers. An occasional merchant-ship or small war-galley was met from time to time and chased into the harbours. A landing was here and there effected and a few villages burned. But these were not the prizes nor the trophies sought. On the 19th September a storm off the Portuguese coast scattered the fleet; six of the best and largest ships being permanently lost sight of and separated from the rest. With the other thirteen Haultain now cruised off Cape St. Vincent directly across the ordinary path of the homeward-bound treasure ships. 19 Sept.

On the 6th October many sails were descried in the distance, and the longing eyes of the Hollanders were at last gratified with what was supposed to be the great West India commercial squadrons. The delusion was brief. Instead of innocent and richly-freighted merchantmen, the new comers soon proved to be the war-ships of Admiral Don Luis de Fazardo, eighteen great galleons and eight 6 Oct.

[35] Grotius, xv. 685. Wagenaar, 221, *seqq.*
[36] Meteren, 541. Grotius, xv. 699, 700. Wagenaar, ix 220–224.

galleys strong, besides lesser vessels—the most formidable fleet that for years had floated in those waters. There had been time for Admiral Haultain to hold but a very brief consultation with his chief officers. As it was manifest that the Hollanders were enormously over-matched, it was decided to manœuvre as well as possible for the weather-gage, and then to fight or to effect an escape, as might seem most expedient after fairly testing the strength of the enemy. It was blowing a fresh gale, and the Netherland fleet had as much as they could stagger with under close-reefed topsails.[37] The war-galleys, fit only for fair weather, were soon forced to take refuge under the lee of the land, but the eighteen galleons, the most powerful vessels then known to naval architecture, were bearing directly down, full before the wind, upon the Dutch fleet.[38]

It must be admitted that Admiral Haultain hardly displayed as much energy now as he had done in the Straits of Dover against the unarmed transports the year before. His ships were soon scattered, right and left, and the manœuvres for the weather-gage resolved themselves into a general scramble for escape.[39] Vice-Admiral Klaaszoon alone held firm, and met the onset of the first comers of the Spanish fleet. A fierce combat, yard-arm to yard-arm, ensued. Klaaszoon's mainmast went by the board, but Haultain, with five ships, all that could be rallied, coming to the rescue, the assailants for a moment withdrew. Five Dutch vessels of moderate strength were now in action against the eighteen great galleons of Fazardo. Certainly it was not an even game, but it might have been played with more heart and better skill. There was but a half-hour of daylight left when Klaaszoon's crippled ship was again attacked.[40] This time there was no attempt to offer him assistance ; the rest of the Dutch fleet crowding all the sails their masts would bear, and using all the devices of their superior seamanship, not to harass the enemy, but to steal as swiftly as possible out of

[37] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

[38] Ibid. It is true that two or three tarracks of a large size and mounting twenty-two guns, were scattered among the galleons.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

his way. Honestly confessing that they dared not come into the fight, they bore away for dear life in every direction.[41] Night came on, and the last that the fugitives knew of the events off Cape St. Vincent was that stout Regnier Klaaszoon had been seen at sunset in the midst of the Spanish fleet ; the sound of his broadsides saluting their ears as they escaped.

Left to himself, alone in a dismasted ship, the vice-admiral never thought of yielding to the eighteen Spanish galleons. To the repeated summons of Don Luis Fazardo that he should surrender he remained obstinately deaf. Knowing that it was impossible for him to escape, and fearing that he might blow up his vessel rather than surrender, the enemy made no attempt to board. Spanish chivalry was hardly more conspicuous on this occasion than Dutch valour, as illustrated by Admiral Haultain. Two whole days and nights Klaaszoon drifted about in his crippled ship, exchanging broadsides with his antagonists, and with his colours flying on the stump of his mast. The fact would seem incredible, were it not attested by perfectly trustworthy contemporary accounts. At last his hour seemed to have come. His ship was sinking ; a final demand for surrender,[42] with promise of quarter, was made. Out of his whole crew but sixty remained alive ; many of them badly wounded.

He quietly announced to his officers and men his decision never to surrender, in which all concurred. They knelt together upon the deck, and the admiral made a prayer in which all fervently joined. With his own hand Klaaszoon then lighted the powder magazine, and the ship was blown into the air. Two sailors, all that were left alive, were picked out of the sea by the Spaniards and brought on board one of the vessels of the fleet. Desperately mutilated, those grim Dutchmen lived a few minutes to tell the tale, and then died defiant on the enemy's deck.[43]

[41] "Ende daernade bleef den vice-admirael van d'een ende van d'ander verlaten d'een hem excuseerende of d'ander maer meest datse de Spaensche schepen nict dorsten aendoen."—Meteren, 541.

[42] Meteren, *ubi sup.* Ibid. Grot. xv. 700. Wagenaar, ix. 223.

[43] "Duo semiusti paulum provixere ab Hispanio excepti cum miracule

Yet it was thought that a republic, which could produce men like Regnier Klaaszoon and his comrades, could be subjected again to despotism, after a war for independence of forty years, and that such sailors could be forbidden to sail the eastern and western seas. No epigrammatic phrase has been preserved of this simple Regnier, the son of Nicholas. He only did what is sometimes talked about in phraseology more or less melo-dramatic, and did it in a very plain way.

Such extreme deeds may have become so much less necessary in the world, that to threaten them is apt to seem fantastic. Exactly at that crisis of history, however, and especially in view of the Dutch admiral commanding having refused a combat of one to three, the speechless self-devotion of the vice-admiral was better than three years of eloquent arguments and a ship-load of diplomatic correspondence, such as were already impending over the world.

Admiral Haultain returned with all his ships uninjured—the six missing vessels having found their way at last safely back to the squadron—but with a very great crack to his reputation. It was urged very justly, both by the States-General and the public, that if one ship under a determined commander could fight the whole Spanish fleet two days and nights, and sink unconquered at last, ten ships more might have put the enemy to flight, or at least have saved the vice-admiral from destruction.[44]

But very few days after the incidents just described, the merchant fleet which, instead of Don Luis Fazardo's war-galleons, Admiral Haultain had so longed to encounter, arrived safely at San Lucar. It was the most splendid treasure-fleet that had ever entered a Spanish port, and the Dutch admiral's heart might well have danced for joy, had he chanced to come a little later on the track. There were fifty ships, under charge of General Alonzo de Ochares Galindo

spectantibus horridos vultus vocesque in ipsa morte contumaciam."—Grot. *ubi sup.* Meteren. Wagenaar.

[44] Meteren, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.*

and General Ganevaye. They had on board, according to the registers, 1,914,176 dollars worth of bullion for the king, and 6,086,617 dollars for merchants, or 8,000,000 dollars in all, besides rich cargoes of silk, cochineal, sarsaparilla, indigo, Brazil wood, and hides; the result of two years of pressure upon Peruvians, Mexicans, and Brazilians. Never had Spanish finances been at so low an ebb. Never was so splendid an income more desirable. The king's share of the cargo was enough to pay half the arrearages due to his mutinous troops; and for such housekeeping this was to be in funds.[45]

There were no further exploits on land or sea that year. There were, however, deaths of three personages often mentioned in this history. The learned Justus Lipsius died in Louvain, a good editor and scholar, and as sincere a Catholic at last as he had been alternately a bigoted Calvinist and an earnest Lutheran. His reputation was thought to have suffered by his later publications,[46] but the world at large was occupied with sterner stuff than those classic productions, and left the final decision to posterity.

A man of a different mould, the turbulent, high-born, hard-fighting, hard-drinking Hohenlo, died also this year, brother-in-law and military guardian, subsequently rival and political and personal antagonist, of Prince Maurice. His daring deeds and his troublesome and mischievous adventures have been recounted in these pages. His name will be always prominent in the history of the republic, to which he often rendered splendid service, but he died, as he had lived, a glutton and a melancholy sot.[47]

The third remarkable personage who passed away was one whose name will be remembered as long as the Netherlands have a history, old Count John of Nassau, only surviving brother of William the Silent.[48] He had been ever prominent and deeply interested in the great religious and political

[45] Meteren, 541vo. [46] Grotius, xv. 709. [47] Ibid, 708. [48] Ibid.

movements of upper and lower Germany, and his services in the foundation of the Dutch commonwealth were signal, and ever generously acknowledged. At one period, as will be recollected, he was stadholder of Gelderland, and he was ever ready with sword, purse, and counsel to aid in the great struggle for independence.

CHAPTER XLVI.

General desire for peace — Political aspect of Europe — Designs of the kings of England, France, and Spain concerning the United Provinces — Matrimonial schemes of Spain — Conference between the French ministers and the Dutch envoy — Confidential revelations — Henry's desire to annex the Netherlands to France — Discussion of the subject — Artifice of Barneveld — Impracticability of a compromise between the Provinces and Spain — Formation of a West India Company — Secret mission from the archdukes to the Hague — Reply of the States-General — Return of the archdukes' envoy — Arrangement of an eight months' armistice.

THE general tendency towards a pacification in Europe at the close of the year could hardly be mistaken. The languor of fatigue, rather than any sincere desire for peace seemed to make negotiations possible. It was not likely that great truths would yet be admitted, or that ruling individuals or classes would recognise the rise of a new system out of the rapidly dissolving elements of the one which had done its work. War was becoming more and more expensive, while commerce, as the world slowly expanded itself, and manifested its unsuspected resources, was becoming more and more lucrative. It was not, perhaps, that men hated each other less, but that they had for a time exhausted their power and their love for slaughter. Meanwhile new devices for injuring humanity and retarding its civilization were revealing themselves out of that very intellectual progress which ennobled the new era. Although war might still be regarded as the normal condition of the civilized world, it was possible for the chosen ones to whom the earth and its fulness belonged, to inflict general damage otherwise than by perpetual battles.

In the east, west, north, and south of Europe peace was thrusting itself as it were uncalled for and unexpected upon the general attention. Charles and his nephew Sigismund,

and the false Demetrius, and the intrigues of the Jesuits, had provided too much work for Sweden, Poland, and Russia to leave those countries much leisure for mingling in the more important business of Europe at this epoch, nor have their affairs much direct connection with this history. Venice, in its quarrels with the Jesuits, had brought Spain, France, and all Italy into a dead lock, out of which a compromise had been made not more satisfactory to the various parties than compromises are apt to prove. The Dutch republic still maintained the position which it had assumed, a quarter of a century before, of actual and legal independence; while Spain, on the other hand, still striving after universal monarchy, had not, of course, abated one jot of its pretensions to absolute dominion over its rebellious subjects in the Netherlands.

The holy Roman and the sublime Ottoman empires had also drifted into temporary peace; the exploits of the Persians and other Asiatic movements having given Ahmed more work than was convenient on his eastern frontier, while Stephen Botshkay had so completely got the better of Rudolph in Transylvania as to make repose desirable. So there was a treaty between the great Turk and the great Christian on the basis of what each possessed; Stephen Botshkay was recognized as prince of Transylvania with part of Hungary, and, when taken off soon afterwards by family poison, he recommended on his death-bed the closest union between Hungary and Transylvania, as well as peace with the emperor, so long as it might be compatible with the rights of the Magyars.[1]

France and England, while suspecting each other, dreading each other, and very sincerely hating each other, were drawn into intimate relations by their common detestation of Spain, with which power both had now formal treaties of alliance and friendship. This was the result of their mighty projects for humbling the house of Austria and annihilating its power. England hated the Netherlands because of the injuries she

[1] Grotius, xv. 712, 713. Meteren, 543.

had done them, the many benefits she had conferred upon them, and more than all on account of the daily increasing commercial rivalry between the two most progressive states in Christendom, the two powers which, comparatively weak as they were in territory, capital, and population, were most in harmony with the spirit of the age.

The Government of England was more hostile than its people to the United Provinces. James never spoke of the Netherlanders but as upstarts and rebels, whose success ought to be looked upon with horror by the Lord's anointed everywhere. He could not shut his eyes to the fact that, with the republic destroyed, and a Spanish sacerdotal despotism established in Holland and Zeeland, with Jesuit seminaries in full bloom in Amsterdam and the Hague, his own rebels in Ireland might prove more troublesome than ever, and gunpowder plots in London become common occurrences. The Earl of Tyrone at that very moment was receiving enthusiastic hospitality at the archduke's court, much to the disgust of the presbyterian sovereign of the United Kingdom, who nevertheless, despite his cherished theology, was possessed with an unconquerable craving for a close family alliance with the most Catholic king. His ministers were inclined to Spain, and the British Government was at heart favourable to some kind of arrangement by which the Netherlands might be reduced to the authority of their former master, in case no scheme could be carried into effect for acquiring a virtual sovereignty over those provinces by the British crown. Moreover, and most of all, the King of France being supposed to contemplate the annexation of the Netherlands to his own dominions, the jealousy excited by such ambition made it even possible for James's Government to tolerate the idea of Dutch independence. Thus the court and cabinet of England were as full of contradictory hopes and projects as a madman's brain.

The rivalry between the courts of England and France for the Spanish marriages, and by means of them to obtain ultimately the sovereignty of all the Netherlands, was the key

to most of the diplomacy and interpalatial intrigue of the several first years of the century. The negotiations of Cornwallis at Madrid were almost simultaneous with the schemes of Villeroy and Rosny at Paris.

A portion of the English Government, so soon as its treaty with Spain had been signed, seemed secretly determined to do as much injury to the republic as might lie in its power. While at heart convinced that the preservation of the Netherlands was necessary for England's safety, it was difficult for James and the greater part of his advisers to overcome their repugnance to the republic, and their jealousy of the great commercial successes which the republic had achieved.[2]

It was perfectly plain that a continuance of the war by England and the Netherlands united would have very soon ended in the entire humiliation of Spain.[3] Now that peace

[2] "For my own particular," wrote Cornwallis, "though I hold the preservation of the Low Countries most wholesome and necessary for the kingdom of Great Britain, yet dare I not wish their strength and wealth much increased; it being better to endure an advantage in a monarchy than in a people of their condition."—Memorials of affairs of State, from the Papers of Sir Ralph Winwood. London, 1725. Vol. II. p. 76.

"Though we must respect the Hollanders," wrote the Earl of Northampton, "(for such reasons as need no dilatation to a man of your capacity), yet we resolve to mark our favours that they be without exception to Spain."—Ibid. pp. 92, 93.

[3] "The King" (of Spain) wrote Cornwallis, "being now freed from the distractions he was wont to find by the encounters of the English, proceeds against the Hollanders with more life and hope. If this peace had not been concluded, in mine own understanding I see not how it had been possible for him to have borne out the infinite weight of charges and business laid upon him." And again, "England never lost such an opportunity of winning honour and wealth as by relinquishing the war with Spain. The king and kingdom were reduced to such estate as they could not in all likelihood have endured the space of two years more; his own treasury was exhausted, his rents and customs assigned for the most part for money borrowed, his nobility poor and much indebted, his merchants wasted, his people of the country in all extremity of necessity, his devices of gaining by the increase of the valuation of money and other such of that nature all played over; his credit in borrowing, by means of the incertainty of his estate during the war with England, much decayed; the subjects of his many distracted dominions held in obedience by force and fear, not by love and duty. Himself very young, and in that regard with this people in no great veneration, and the less for suffering himself to be wholly governed by a man (viz. Duke of Lerma) generally hated of his own country. If this state, standing on such feeble foundations, had made but one such stumble as his father did in the time of the late queen, hardly could he have recovered without a fall; his nearest and last-gained kingdoms more hurting this nation than any other, desiring nothing more than the ruin of it."—Ibid. 72, 75, 76.

had been made, however, it was thought possible that England might make a bargain with her late enemy for destroying the existence and dividing the territory of her late ally. Accordingly the Spanish cabinet lost no time in propounding, under seal of secrecy, and with even more mystery than was usually employed by the most Catholic court, a scheme for the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the Infanta, the bridal pair, when arrived at proper age, to be endowed with all the Netherlands, both obedient and republican, in full sovereignty One thing was necessary to the carrying out of this excellent plot,—the reduction of the republic into her ancient subjection to Spain before her territory could be transferred to the future Princess of Wales.[4]

It was proposed by the Spanish Government that England should undertake this part of the job, and that King James for such service should receive an annual pension of one million ducats a year. It was also stipulated that certain cities in the republican dominions should be pledged to him as security for the regular payment of that stipend.[5] Sir Charles Cornwallis, English ambassador in Spain, lent a most favourable ear to these proposals, and James eagerly sanctioned them so soon as they were secretly imparted to that monarch. "The king here," said Cornwallis, "hath need of the King of Great Britain's arm. Our king . . . . hath good occasion to use the help of the King of Spain's purse. The assistance of England to help this nation out of that quicksand of the Low Countries, where so long they have struggled to tread themselves out, and by proof find that they sink deeper in, will be a sovereign medicine to the malady of this estate. The addition of a million of ducats to the revenue of our sovereign will be a good help to his estate."[6]

The Spanish Government had even the effrontery to offer

[4] The important facts connected with this intrigue—except such as, being too delicate to be committed to paper, were entrusted to confidential agents—may be found in Winwood's Memorials, vol. ii. pp. 160-177. Compare Van Deventer, iii. 74.

[5] See in particular Winwood, ii. 160, 161.

[6] Ibid. 177.

the English envoy a reward of two hundred thousand crowns if the negotiations should prove successful.[7] Care was to be taken however that Great Britain, by this accession of power, both present and in prospect, should not grow too great, Spain reserving to herself certain strongholds and maritime positions in the Netherlands, for the proper security of her European and Indian commerce.[8]

It was thought high time for the bloodshed to cease in the provinces ; and as England, by making a treaty of peace with Spain when Spain was at the last gasp, had come to the rescue of that power, it was logical that she should complete the friendly work by compelling the rebellious provinces to awake from their dream of independence. If the statesmen of Holland believed in the possibility of that independence, the statesmen of England knew better. If the turbulent little republic was not at last convinced that it had no right to create so much turmoil and inconvenience for its neighbours and for Christendom in general in order to maintain its existence, it should be taught its duty by the sovereigns of Spain and Britain.[9]

It was observed, however, that the more greedily James listened day after day to the marriage propositions, the colder became the Spanish cabinet in regard to that point, the more disposed to postpone those nuptials "to God's providence and future event."[10]

The high hopes founded on these secret stratagems were suddenly dashed to the earth before the end of the year ; the explosion of the Gunpowder Plot blowing the castles in Spain into the air.

Of course the Spanish politicians vied with each other in

[7] Winwood, ii. 215. Cornwallis repelled with indignation the attempts to bribe him. "Would they give me for every crown a million, I would not think upon so unfaithful a work," he said.

[8] Ibid. 160

[9] "Never can those other people (viz. of the United Provinces) take a better opportunity to compound so great a difference, neither can they require more, with any proportion of reason and justice, than will be yielded unto them. If their purpose be to maintain a popular liberty with the yearly effusion of so much blood, and the infesting of all Christendom so as a few particulars may continue the means of their authority, and enrich themselves, they will by his Majesty be unmasked."—Sir Charles Cornwallis to Earl of Salisbury. Ibid. 174.

[10] Ibid. 166.

expressions of horror and indignation at the Plot, and the wicked contrivers thereof, and suggested to Cornwallis that the King of France was probably at the bottom of it.[11]

They declined to give up Owen and Baldwin, however, and meantime the negotiations for the marriage of the Prince of Wales and the Infanta, the million ducats of yearly pension for the needy James, and the reduction of the Dutch republic to its ancient slavery to Spain "under the eye and arm of Britain," faded indefinitely away. Salisbury indeed was always too wise to believe in the possibility of the schemes with which James and some of his other counsellors had been so much infatuated.

It was almost dramatic that these plottings between James and the Catholic king against the life of the republic should have been signally and almost simultaneously avenged by the conspiracy of Guido Fawkes.

On the other hand, Rosny had imparted to the Dutch envoy the schemes of Henry and his ministers in regard to the same object, early in 1605. "Spain is more tired of the war," said he to Aerssens, under seal of absolute secrecy, "than you are yourselves. She is now negotiating for a marriage between the Dauphin and the Infanta, and means to give her the United Provinces, as at present constituted, for a marriage portion. Villeroy and Sillery believe the plan feasible, but demand all the Netherlands together. As for me, I shall have faith in it if they send their Infanta hither at once, or make a regular cession of the territory. Do you believe that my lords the States will agree to the proposition?"[12]

It would be certainly difficult to match in history the effrontery of such a question. The republican envoy was asked point blank whether his country would resign her dearly gained liberty and give herself as a dowry for Philip the Second's three-years-old grand daughter. Aerssens replied cautiously that he had never heard the matter discussed in the provinces. It had always been thought that the French

[11] Winwood, ii. 173. [12] Deventer, 41.

king had no pretensions to their territory, but had ever advocated their independence. He hinted that such a proposition was a mere apple of discord thrown between two good allies by Spain. Rosny admitted the envoy's arguments, and said that his Majesty would do nothing without the consent of the Dutch Government, and that he should probably be himself sent ere long to the Hague to see if he could not obtain some little recognition from the States.[13]

Thus it was confidentially revealed to the agent of the republic that her candid adviser and ally was hard at work, in conjunction with her ancient enemy, to destroy her independence, annex her territory, and appropriate to himself all the fruits of her great war, her commercial achievements, and her vast sacrifices; while, as we have just seen, English politicians at the same moment were attempting to accomplish the same feat for England's supposed advantage. All that was wished by Henry to begin with was a little, a very little, recognition of his sovereignty. "You will do well to reflect on this delicate matter in time," wrote Aerssens to the Advocate; "I know that the King of Spain is inclined to make this offer, and that they are mad enough in this place to believe the thing feasible. For me, I reject all such talk until they have got the Infanta—that is to say, until the Greek Kalends. I am ashamed that they should believe it here, and fearful that there is still more evil concealed than I know of."[14]

Towards the close of the year 1606 the French Government became still more eager to carry out their plans of alliance and absorption. Aerssens, who loved a political intrigue better than became a republican envoy, was perfectly aware of Henry's schemes. He was disposed to humour them, in order to make sure of his military assistance, but with the secret intention of seeing them frustrated by the determined opposition of the States.

The French ministers, by command of their sovereign, were disposed to deal very plainly. They informed the Dutch

[13] Deventer, 42. [14] Ibid. 43

diplomatist, with very little circumlocution, that if the republic wished assistance from France she was to pay a heavy price for it. Not a pound of flesh only, but the whole body corporate, was to be surrendered if its destruction was to be averted by French arms.

"You know," said Sillery, "that princes in all their actions consider their interests, and his Majesty has not so much affection for your conservation as to induce him to resign his peaceful position. Tell me, I pray you, what would you do for his Majesty in case anything should be done for you? You were lately in Holland. Do you think that they would give themselves to the king if he assisted them? Do you not believe that Prince Maurice has designs on the sovereignty, and would prevent the fulfilment of the king's hopes? What will you do for us in return for our assistance?" [15]

Aerssens was somewhat perplexed, but he was cunning at fence. "We will do all we can," said he, "for any change is more supportable than the yoke of Spain."

"What can you do then?" persisted Sillery. "Give us your opinion in plain French, I beg of you, and lay aside all passion; for we have both the same object—your preservation. Besides interest, his Majesty has affection for you. Let him only see some advantage for himself to induce him to assist you more powerfully. Suppose you should give us what you have and what you may acquire in Flanders, with the promise to treat secretly with us when the time comes. Could you do that?" [16]

The envoy replied that this would be tearing the commonwealth in pieces. If places were given away, the jealousy of the English would be excited. Certainly it would be no light matter to surrender Sluys, the fruit of Maurice's skill and energy, the splendidly earned equivalent for the loss of Ostend. "As to Sluys and other places in Flanders," said Aerssens, "I don't know if towns comprised in our Union could be transferred or pledged without their own consent and that of the States. Should such a thing get wind we

[15] Aerssens to Olden-Barneveld, 7 Oct. 1606, in Deventer, iii. 87–93. [16] Ibid.

might be ruined. Nevertheless I will write to learn what his Majesty may hope."

"The people," returned Sillery, "need know nothing of this transfer; for it might be made secretly by Prince Maurice, who could put the French quietly into Sluys and other Flemish places. Meantime you had best make a journey to Holland to arrange matters so that the deputies, coming hither, may be amply instructed in regard to Sluys, and no time be lost. His Majesty is determined to help you if you know how to help yourselves." [17]

The two men then separated, Sillery enjoining it upon the envoy to see the king next morning, "in order to explain to his Majesty, as he had just been doing to himself, that this sovereignty could not be transferred, without the consent of the whole people, nor the people be consulted in secret."

"It is necessary therefore to be armed," continued Henry's minister very significantly, "before aspiring to the sovereignty." [18]

Thus there was a faint glimmer of appreciation at the French court of the meaning of popular sovereignty. It did not occur to the minister that the right of giving consent was to be respected. The little obstacle was to be overcome by stratagem and by force. Prince Maurice was to put French garrisons stealthily into Sluys and other towns conquered by the republic in Flanders. Then the magnanimous ally was to rise at the right moment and overcome all resistance by force of arms. The plot was a good one. It is passing strange, however, that the character of the Nassaus and of the Dutch nation should after the last fifty years have been still so misunderstood. It seemed in France possible that Maurice would thus defile his honour and the Netherlanders barter their liberty, by accepting a new tyrant in place of the one so long ago deposed.

"This is the marrow of our conference," said Aerssens to Barneveld, reporting the interview, "and you may thus perceive whither are tending the designs of his Majesty. It seems

[17] Aerssens to Olden-Barneveld, *ubi sup.* [18] Ibid.

that they are aspiring here to the sovereignty, and all my letters have asserted the contrary. If you will examine a little more closely, however, you will find that there is no contradiction. This acquisition would be desirable for France if it could be made peacefully. As it can only be effected by war you may make sure that it will not be attempted ; for the great maxim and basis of this kingdom is to preserve repose, and at the same time give such occupation to the King of Spain that his means shall be consumed and his designs frustrated. All this will cease if we make peace.

"Thus in treating with the king we must observe two rules. The first is that we can maintain ourselves no longer unless powerfully assisted, and that, the people inclining to peace, we shall be obliged to obey the people. Secondly, we must let no difficulty appear as to the desire expressed by his Majesty to have the sovereignty of these provinces. We ought to let him hope for it, but to make him understand that by ordinary and legitimate means he cannot aspire to it. We will make him think that we have an equal desire with himself, and we shall thus take from those evil-disposed counsellors the power to injure us who are always persuading him that he is only making us great for ourselves, and thus giving us the power to injure him. In short, the king can hope nothing from us overtly, and certainly nothing covertly. By explaining to him that we require the authorization of the people, and by showing ourselves prompt to grant his request, he will be the very first to prevent us from taking any steps, in order that his repose may not be disturbed. I know that France does not wish to go to war with Spain. Let us then pretend that we wish to be under the dominion of France, and that we will lead our people to that point if the king desires it, but that it cannot be done secretly. Believe me, he will not wish it on such conditions, while we shall gain much by this course. Would to God that we could engage France in war with Spain. All the utility would be ours, and the accidents of arms would so press them to Spain, Italy, and other places, that they would have little

leisure to think of us. Consider all this and conceal it from Buzanval."[19]

Buzanval, it is well known, was the French envoy at the Hague, and it must be confessed that these schemes and paltry falsehoods on the part of the Dutch agent were as contemptible as any of the plots contrived every day in Paris or Madrid. Such base coin as this was still circulating in diplomacy as if fresh from the Machiavellian mint; but the republican agent ought to have known that his Government had long ago refused to pass it current.

Soon afterwards this grave matter was discussed at the Hague between Henry's envoy and Barneveld. It was a very delicate negotiation. The Advocate wished to secure the assistance of a powerful but most unscrupulous ally, and at the same time to conceal his real intention to frustrate the French design upon the independence of the republic.

Disingenuous and artful as his conduct unquestionably was, it may at least be questioned whether in that age of deceit any other great statesman would have been more frank. If the comparatively weak commonwealth, by openly and scornfully refusing all the insidious and selfish propositions of the French king, had incurred that monarch's wrath, it would have taken a noble position no doubt, but it would have perhaps been utterly destroyed. The Advocate considered himself justified in using the artifices of war against a subtle and dangerous enemy who wore the mask of a friend. When the price demanded for military protection was the voluntary abandonment of national independence in favour of the protector, the man who guided the affairs of the Netherlands did not hesitate to humour and to outwit the king who strove to subjugate the republic. At the same time—however one may be disposed to censure the dissimulation from the standing-ground of a lofty morality—it should not be forgotten that Barneveld never hinted at any possible connivance on his part with an infraction of the laws. Whatever might be the result of time, of persuasion, of policy, he never led

[19] Aerssens to Olden-Barneveld, *ubi sup.*

Henry or his ministers to believe that the people of the Netherlands could be deprived of their liberty by force or fraud. He was willing to play a political game, in which he felt himself inferior to no man, trusting to his own skill and coolness for success. If the tyrant were defeated, and at the same time made to serve the cause of the free commonwealth, the Advocate believed this to be fair play.

Knowing himself surrounded by gamblers and tricksters, he probably did not consider himself to be cheating because he did not play his cards upon the table.

So when Buzanval informed him early in October that the possession of Sluys and other Flemish towns would not be sufficient for the king, but that they must offer the sovereignty on even more favourable conditions than had once been proposed to Henry III., the Advocate told him roundly that my lords the States were not likely to give the provinces to any man, but meant to maintain their freedom and their rights.[20] The envoy replied that his Majesty would be able to gain more favour perhaps with the common people of the country.

When it is remembered that the States had offered the sovereignty of the provinces to Henry III., abjectly and as it were without any conditions at all,[21] the effrontery of Henry IV. may be measured, who claimed the same sovereignty, after twenty years of republican independence, upon even more favourable terms than those which his predecessor had rejected.

Barneveld, in order to mitigate the effect of his plump refusal of the royal overtures, explained to Buzanval, what Buzanval very well knew, that the times had now changed; that in those days, immediately after the death of William the Silent, despair and disorder had reigned in the provinces, "while that dainty delicacy—liberty—had not so long been sweetly tickling the appetites of the people; that the English

[20] Memorandum of an interview with Buzanval by Olden-Barneveld, Oct. 1606. Deventer, iii. 94, 95. [21] Vol. I. of this work, chaps. ii. and iv.

had not then acquired their present footing in the country, nor the house of Nassau the age, the credit, and authority to which it had subsequently attained."[22]

He then intimated—and here began the deception, which certainly did not deceive Buzanval—that if things were handled in the right way, there was little doubt as to the king's reaching the end proposed, but that all depended on good management. It was an error, he said, to suppose that in one, two, or three months, eight provinces and their principal members, to wit, forty good cities all enjoying liberty and equality, could be induced to accept a foreign sovereign.

Such language was very like irony, and probably not too subtle to escape the fine perception of the French envoy.

The first thing to be done, continued the Advocate, is to persuade the provinces to aid the king with all their means to conquer the dis-united provinces—to dispose of the archdukes, in short, and to drive the Spaniards from the soil—and then, little by little, to make it clear that there could be no safety for the States except in reducing the whole body of the Netherlands under the authority of the king. Let his Majesty begin by conquering and annexing to his crown the provinces nearest him, and he would then be able to persuade the others to a reasonable arrangement.

Whether the Advocate's general reply was really considered by Buzanval as a grave sarcasm, politely veiled, may be a question. That envoy, however, spoke to his Government of the matter as surrounded with difficulties, but not wholly desperate. Barneveld was, he said, inclined to doubt whether the archdukes would be able, before any negotiations were begun, to comply with the demand which he had made upon them to have a declaration in writing that the United Provinces were to be regarded as a free people over whom they pretended to no authority. If so, the French king would at once be informed of the fact. Meantime the envoy expressed the safe opinion that, if Prince Maurice and the Advocate

[22] Buzanval, in Deventer, iii. 95, 96.

together should take the matter of Henry's sovereignty in hand with zeal, they might conduct the bark to the desired haven. Surely this was an 'if' with much virtue in it. And notwithstanding that he chose to represent Barneveld as rich, tired, at the end of his Latin, and willing enough to drop his anchor in a snug harbour, in order to make his fortune secure, it was obvious enough that Buzanval had small hope at heart of seeing his master's purpose accomplished.[23]

As to Prince Maurice, the envoy did not even affect to believe him capable of being made use of, strenuous as the efforts of the French Government in that direction had been. "He has no private designs that I can find out," said Buzanval, doing full justice to the straightforward and sincere character of the prince. "He asks no change for himself or for his country." The envoy added, as a matter of private opinion however, that if an alteration were to be made in the constitution of the provinces, Maurice would prefer that it should be made in favour of France than of any other Government.

He lost no opportunity, moreover, of impressing it upon his Government that if the sovereignty were to be secured for France at all, it could only be done by observing great caution, and by concealing their desire to swallow the republic of which they were professing themselves the friends. The jealousy of England was sure to be awakened if France appeared too greedy at the beginning. On the other hand, that power "might be the more easily rocked into a profound sleep if France did not show its appetite at the very beginning of the banquet."[24] That the policy of France should be steadily but stealthily directed towards getting possession of as many strong places as possible in the Netherlands had long been his opinion. "Since we don't mean to go to war," said

[23] Buzanval, in Deventer, iii. 95, 96. See also the letter of Aerssens to Olden Barneveld, 14 November, 1606, in which he again urges the propriety of pretending to bestow the sovereignty on France in the certainty that she will find it impossible to accept it. Also the Memoir of Aerssens of 6 January, 1606. Ibid. 99–103. Groen v. Prinsterer, Archives, ii. 370–374.

[24] Authorities last cited.

he a year before to Villeroy, "let us at least follow the example of the English, who have known how to draw a profit out of the necessities of this state. Why should we not demand, or help ourselves to, a few good cities. Sluys, for example, would be a security for us, and of great advantage." [25]

Suspicion was rife on this subject at the court of Spain. Certainly it would be less humiliating to the Catholic crown to permit the independence of its rebellious subjects than to see them incorporated into the realms of either France or England. It is not a very striking indication of the capacity of great rulers to look far into the future that both France and England should now be hankering after the sovereignty of those very provinces, the solemn offer of which by the provinces themselves both France and England had peremptorily and almost contemptuously refused.

In Spain itself the war was growing very wearisome. Three hundred thousand dollars a month could no longer be relied upon from the royal exchequer, or from the American voyages, or from the kite-flying operations of the merchant princes on the Genoa exchange.

A greet fleet, to be sure, had recently arrived, splendidly laden, from the West Indies, as already stated. Pagan slaves, scourged to their dreadful work, continued to supply to their Christian taskmasters the hidden treasures of the New World in exchange for the blessings of the Evangel as thus revealed; but these treasures could never fill the perpetual sieve of the Netherland war, rapidly and conscientiously as they were poured into it, year after year.

The want of funds in the royal exchequer left the soldiers in Flanders unpaid, and as an inevitable result mutiny admirably organized and calmly defiant was again established throughout the obedient provinces. This happened regularly once a year, so that it seemed almost as business-like a proceeding for an Eletto to proclaim mutiny as for a sovereign to declare martial law. Should the whole army mutiny at once, what might become of the kingdom of Spain?

[25] Deventer, III. xiv.

Moreover, a very uneasy feeling was prevalent that, as formerly, the Turks had crossed the Hellespont into Europe by means of a Genoese alliance and Genoese galleys, so now the Moors were contemplating the reconquest of Granada, and of their other ancient possessions in Spain, with the aid of the Dutch republic and her powerful fleets.[26]

The Dutch cruisers watched so carefully on the track of the homeward-bound argosies, that the traffic was becoming more dangerous than lucrative, particularly since the public law established by Admiral Fazardo, that it was competent for naval commanders to hang, drown, or burn the crews of the enemy's merchantmen.

The Portuguese were still more malcontent than the Spaniards. They had gained little by the absorption of their kingdom by Spain, save participation in the war against the republic, the result of which had been to strip them almost entirely of the conquests of Vasco de Gama and his successors, and to close to them the ports of the Old World and the New.

In the republic there was a party for peace, no doubt, but peace only with independence. As for a return to their original subjection to Spain they were unanimously ready to accept forty years more of warfare rather than to dream of such a proposition. There were many who deliberately preferred war to peace. Bitter experience had impressed very deeply on the Netherlanders the great precept that faith would never be kept with heretics.[27] The present generation had therefore been taught from their cradles to believe that the word peace in Spanish mouths simply meant the Holy Inquisition. It was not unnatural, too, perhaps, that a people who had never known what it was to be at peace might feel, in regard to that blessing, much as the blind or the deaf towards colour or music; as something useful and agreeable, no doubt, but with which they might the more cheerfully

[26] Grotius, xv. 715.

[27] "The Spaniard—who hath been accustomed to serve himself of all the advantages without mercy and sometimes to fail of treaties and contracts, *the memory of which is engraved in the marble hearts of this people to all posterity.*"—Winwood to Lord Cranborne, 12 Sept 1604. Memorials, ii. 30.

dispense, as peculiar circumstances had always kept them in positive ignorance of its nature. The instinct of commercial greediness made the merchants of Holland and Zeeland, and especially those of Amsterdam, dread the revival of Antwerp in case of peace, to the imagined detriment of the great trading centres of the republic. It was felt also to be certain that Spain, in case of negotiations, would lay down as an indispensable preliminary the abstinence on the part of the Netherlanders from all intercourse with the Indies, East or West; and although such a prohibition would be received by those republicans with perfect contempt, yet the mere discussion of the subject moved their spleen. They had already driven the Portuguese out of a large portion of the field in the east, and they were now preparing by means of the same machinery to dispute the monopoly of the Spaniards in the west. To talk of excluding such a people as this from intercourse with any portion of the Old World or the New was the mumbling of dotage; yet nothing could be more certain than that such would be the pretensions of Spain.

As for the stadholder, his vocation was war, his greatness had been derived from war, his genius had never turned itself to pacific pursuits. Should a peace be negotiated, not only would his occupation be gone, but he might even find himself hampered for means. It was probable that his large salaries, as captain and admiral-general of the forces of the republic, would be seriously curtailed, in case his services in the field were no longer demanded, while such secret hopes as he might entertain of acquiring that sovereign power which Barneveld had been inclined to favour, were more likely to be fulfilled if the war should be continued. At the same time, if sovereignty were to be his at all, he was distinctly opposed to such limitations of his authority as were to have been proposed by the States to his father. Rather than reign on those conditions, he avowed that he would throw himself head foremost from the great tower of Hague Castle.

Moreover, the prince was smarting under the consciousness of having lost military reputation, however undeservedly,

in the latter campaigns, and might reasonably hope to gain new glory in the immediate future. Thus, while his great rival, Marquis Spinola, whose fame had grown to so luxuriant a height in so brief a period, had many reasons to dread the results of future campaigning, Maurice seemed to have personally much to lose and nothing to hope for in peace. Spinola was over head and ears in debt. In the past two years he had spent millions of florins out of his own pocket.[28] His magnificent fortune and boundless credit were seriously compromised. He had found it an easier task to take Ostend and relieve Grol than to bolster up the finances of Spain. His acceptances were becoming as much a drug upon the exchanges of Antwerp, Genoa, or Augsburg, as those of the most Catholic king or their Highnesses the archdukes. Ruin stared him in the face, notwithstanding the deeds with which he had startled the world, and he was therefore sincerely desirous of peace, provided, of course, that all those advantages for which the war had been waged in vain could now be secured by negotiation.

There had been, since the arrival of the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, just forty years of fighting. Maurice and the war had been born in the same year, and it would be difficult for him to comprehend that his whole life's work had been a superfluous task, to be rubbed away now with a sponge. Yet that Spain, on the entrance to negotiations, would demand of the provinces submission to her authority, re-establishment of the Cathrlic religion, abstinence from Oriental or American commerce, and the toleration of Spanish soldiers over all the Netherlands, seemed indubitable.

It was equally unquestionable that the seven provinces would demand recognition of their national independence by Spain, would refuse public practice of the Roman religion within their domains, and would laugh to scorn any proposed limitations to their participation in the world's traffic. As to

[28] Hoofds Brieven, N. 3, bl. 3, cited by Wagenaar, ix. 234. The preposterous statement is there made that he had spent *fourteen millions* of his own money.

the presence of Spanish troops on their soil, that was, of course, an inconceivable idea.

Where, then, could even a loophole be found through which the possibility of a compromise could be espied? The ideas of the contending parties were as much opposed to each other as fire and snow. Nevertheless, the great forces of the world seemed to have gradually settled into such an equilibrium as to make the continuance of the war for the present impossible.

Accordingly, the peace-party in Brussels had cautiously put forth its tentacles late in 1606, and again in the early days of the new year. Walrave van Wittenhorst and Doctor Gevaerts had been allowed to come to the Hague, ostensibly on private business, but with secret commission from the archdukes to feel and report concerning the political atmosphere. They found that it was a penal offence in the republic to talk of peace or of truce. They nevertheless suspected that there might be a more sympathetic layer beneath the very chill surface which they everywhere encountered. Having intimated in the proper quarters that the archdukes would be ready to receive or to appoint commissioners for peace or armistice, if becoming propositions should be made, they were allowed on the 10th of January, 1607, to make a communication to the States-General.[29] They indulged in the usual cheap commonplaces on the effusion of blood, the calamities of war, and the blessings of peace, and assured the States of the very benignant disposition of their Highnesses at Brussels.

10 Jan 1607.

The States-General, in their reply, seventeen days afterwards, remarking that the archdukes persisted in their unfounded pretensions of authority over them, took occasion to assure their Highnesses that they had no chance to obtain such authority except by the sword.[30] Whether they were like to accomplish much in that way the history of the past might sufficiently indicate, while on

27 Jan.

[29] Gallucci, xx. 313. Meteren, 545, and vo. Grotius, xv. 717.
[30] Meteren, *ubi sup.*

the other hand the States would always claim the right, and never renounce the hope, of recovering those provinces which had belonged to their free commonwealth since the union of Utrecht, and which force and fraud had torn away.

During twenty-five years that union had been confirmed as a free state by solemn decrees, and many public acts and dealings with the mightiest potentates of Europe, nor could any other answer now be made to the archdukes than the one always given to his holy, Roman Imperial Majesty, and other princes, to wit, that no negotiations could be had with powers making any pretensions in conflict with the solemn decrees and well-maintained rights of the United Netherlands.[31]

It was in this year that two words became more frequent in the mouths of men than they had ever been before; two words which as the ages rolled on were destined to exercise a wider influence over the affairs of this planet than was yet dreamed of by any thinker in Christendom. Those words were America and Virginia. Certainly both words were known before, although India was the more general term for these auriferous regions of the west, which, more than a century long, had been open to European adventure, while the land, baptized in honour of the throned Vestal, had been already made familiar to European ears by the exploits of Raleigh. But it was not till 1607 that Jamestown was founded, that Captain John Smith's adventures with Powhattan, "emperor of Virginia," and his daughter the Princess Pocahontas, became fashionable topics in England, that the English attempts to sail up the Chickahominy to the Pacific Ocean —as abortive as those of the Netherlanders to sail across the North Pole to Cathay—were creating scientific discussion in Europe, and that the first cargo of imaginary gold dust was exported from the James River.[32]

With the adventurous minds of England all aflame with enthusiasm for those golden regions, with the thick-coming fancies for digging, washing, refining the precious sands of Virginia rivers, it was certain that a great rent was now to be

[31] Meteren *ubi sup.* [32] Hildreth's History of the United States, i. 105.

made in the Borgian grant. It was inevitable that the rivalry of the Netherlanders should be excited by the achievements and the marvellous tales of Englishmen beyond the Atlantic, and that they too should claim their share of traffic with that golden and magnificent Unknown which was called America. The rivalry between England and Holland, already so conspicuous in the spicy Archipelagos of the east, was now to be extended over the silvery regions of the west. The two leading commercial powers of the Old World were now to begin their great struggle for supremacy in the western hemisphere.

A charter for what was called a West India Company was accordingly granted by the States-General. West India was understood to extend from the French settlements in Newfoundland or Acadia, along the American coast to the Straits of Magellan, and so around to the South Sea, including the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, besides all of Africa lying between the tropic of Cancer and the Cape of Good Hope. At least, within those limits the West India Company was to have monopoly of trade, all other Netherlanders being warned off the precincts. Nothing could be more magnificent, nor more vague.[33]

The charter was for thirty-six years. The company was to maintain armies and fleets, to build forts and cities, to carry on war, to make treaties of peace and of commerce. It was a small peripatetic republic of merchants and mariners, evolved out of the mother republic—which had at last established its position among the powers of Christendom—and it was to begin its career full grown and in full armour.

The States-General were to furnish the company at starting with one million of florins and with twenty ships of war. The company was to add twenty other ships. The Government was to consist of four chambers of directors. One-half the capital was to be contributed by the chamber of Amsterdam, one-quarter by that of Zeeland, one-eighth respectively by the chambers of the Meuse and of North Holland. The

[33] Grotius, xvi. 721–725. Meteren, 545, 546. Wagenaar, ix. 226–230.

chambers of Amsterdam, of Zeeland, of the Meuse, and of North Holland were to have respectively thirty, eighteen, fifteen, and fifteen directors. Of these seventy-eight, one-third were to be replaced every sixth year by others, while from the whole number seventeen persons were to be elected as a permanent board of managers. Dividends were to be made as soon as the earnings amounted to ten per cent. on the capital. Maritime judges were to decide upon prizes, the proceeds of which were not to be divided for six years, in order that war might be self-sustaining. Afterwards, the treasury of the United Provinces should receive one-tenth, Prince Maurice one-thirtieth, and the merchant stockholders the remainder. Governors and generals were to take the oath of fidelity to the States-General. The merchandize of the company was to be perpetually free of taxation, so far as regarded old duties, and exempt from war-taxes for the first twenty years.[34]

Very violent and conflicting were the opinions expressed throughout the republic in regard to this project. It was urged by those most in favour of it that the chief sources of the greatness of Spain would be thus transferred to the States-General; for there could be no doubt that the Hollanders, unconquerable at sea, familiar with every ocean-path, and whose hardy constitutions defied danger and privation and the extremes of heat and cold, would easily supplant the more delicately organized adventurers from Southern Europe, already enervated by the exhausting climate of America. Moreover, it was idle for Spain to attempt the defence of so vast a portion of the world. Every tribe over which she had exercised sway would furnish as many allies for the Dutch company as it numbered men; for to obey and to hate the tyrannical Spaniard were one. The republic would acquire, in reality, the grandeur which with Spain was but an empty boast, would have the glory of transferring the great war beyond the limits of home into those far distant possessions, where the enemy deemed himself most secure,

[34] Authorities last cited.

and would teach the true religion to savages sunk in their own superstitions, and still further depraved by the imported idolatries of Rome. Commerce was now world-wide, and the time had come for the Netherlanders, to whom the ocean belonged, to tear out from the pompous list of the Catholic king's titles his appellation of Lord of the Seas.

There were others, however, whose language was not so sanguine. They spoke with a shiver of the inhabitants of America, who hated all men, simply because they were men, or who had never manifested any love for their species except as an article of food. To convert such cannibals to Christianity and Calvinism would be a hopeless endeavour, and meanwhile the Spaniards were masters of the country. The attempt to blockade half the globe with forty galleots was insane; for, although the enemy had not occupied the whole territory, he commanded every harbour and position of vantage. Men, scarcely able to defend inch by inch the meagre little sandbanks of their fatherland, who should now go forth in hopes to conquer the world, were but walking in their sleep. They would awake to the consciousness of ruin.

Thus men in the United Provinces spake of America. Especially Barneveld had been supposed to be prominent among the opponents of the new Company, on the ground that the more violently commercial ambition excited itself towards wider and wilder fields of adventure, the fainter grew inclinations for peace. The Advocate, who was all but omnipotent in Holland and Zeeland, subsequently denied the imputation of hostility to the new corporation, but the establishment of the West India Company, although chartered, was postponed.[35]

The archdukes had not been discouraged by the result of their first attempts at negotiation, for Wittenhorst had reported a disposition towards peace as prevalent in the rebellious provinces, so far as he had contrived, during his brief mission, to feel the public pulse.

[35] Wagenaar, ix. 230.

On the 6th February, 1607, Werner Cruwel, an insolvent tradesman of Brussels, and a relative of Recorder Aerssens, father of the envoy at Paris, made his appearance very unexpectedly at the house of his kinsman at the Hague. Sitting at the dinner-table, but neither eating nor drinking, he was asked by his host what troubled him. He replied that he had a load on his breast. Aerssens begged him, if it was his recent bankruptcy that oppressed him, to use philosophy and patience. The merchant answered that he who confessed well was absolved well. He then took from his pocket-book a letter from President Richardot, and said he would reveal what he had to say after dinner. The cloth being removed, and the wife and children of Aerssens having left the room, Cruwel disclosed that he had been sent by Richardot and Father Neyen on a secret mission. The recorder, much amazed and troubled, refused to utter a word, save to ask if Cruwel would object to confer with the Advocate. The merchant expressing himself as ready for such an interview, the recorder, although it was late, immediately sent a message to the great statesman. Barneveld was in bed and asleep, but was aroused to receive the communication of Aerssens. "We live in such a calumnious time," said the recorder, "that many people believe that you and I know more of the recent mission of Wittenhorst than we admit. You had best interrogate Cruwel in the presence of witnesses. I know not the man's humour, but it seems to me since his failure, that, in spite of his shy and lumpish manner, he is false and cunning." [36]

The result was a secret interview, on the 8th February, between Prince Maurice, Barneveld, and the recorder, in which Cruwel was permitted to state the object of his mission. He then produced a short memorandum, signed by Spinola and by Father Neyen, to the effect that the archdukes were willing to treat for a truce of ten or twelve years, on the sole condition that the States would abstain from the India navigation. He exhibited also another paper, signed only by

[36] Original documents in Deventer, iii. 104–109.

Neyen, in which that friar proposed to come secretly to the Hague, no one in Brussels to know of the visit save the archdukes and Spinola; and all in the United Provinces to be equally ignorant except the prince, the Advocate, and the recorder. Cruwel was then informed that if Neyen expected to discuss such grave matters with the prince, he must first send in a written proposal that could go on all fours and deserve attention. A week afterwards Cruwel came back with a paper in which Neyen declared himself authorized by the archdukes to treat with the States on the basis of their liberty and independence, and to ask what they would give in return for so great a concession as this renunciation of all right to "the so-called United Provinces."[37]

This being a step in advance, it was decided to permit the visit of Neyen. It was, however, the recorded opinion of the distinguished personages to whom the proposal was made that it was a trick and a deception. The archdukes would, no doubt, it was said, nominally recognise the provinces as a free State, but without really meaning it. Meantime, they would do their best to corrupt the Government and to renew the war after the republic had by this means been separated from its friends.[38]

John Neyen, father commissary of the Franciscans, who had thus invited himself to the momentous conference, was a very smooth Flemish friar, who seemed admirably adapted, for various reasons, to glide into the rebel country and into the hearts of the rebels. He was a Netherlander, born at Antwerp, when Antwerp was a portion of the united commonwealth, of a father who had been in the confidential service of William the Silent. He was eloquent in the Dutch language, and knew the character of the Dutch people. He had lived much at court, both in Madrid and Brussels, and was familiar with the ways of kings and courtiers. He was a holy man, incapable of a thought of worldly advancement for himself, but he was a master of the logic often thought most conclusive in those days; no man insinuating golden arguments more

[37] Original documents in Deventer, iii. 104–109. [38] Ibid.

adroitly than he into half-reluctant palms. Blessed with a visage of more than Flemish frankness, he had in reality a most wily and unscrupulous disposition. Insensible to contumely, and incapable of accepting a rebuff, he could wind back to his purpose when less supple negotiators would have been crushed.[39]

He was described by his admirers as uniting the wisdom of the serpent with the guilelessness of the dove.[40] Who better than he then, in this double capacity, to coil himself around the rebellion, and to carry the olive-branch in his mouth?

On the 25th February the monk, disguised in the dress of a burgher, arrived at Ryswick, a village a mile and a half from the Hague. He was accompanied on the journey by Cruwel, and they gave themselves out as travelling tradesmen."[41] After nightfall, a carriage having been sent to the hostelry, according to secret agreement, by Recorder Aerssens, John Neyen was brought to the Hague. The friar, as he was driven on through these hostile regions, was somewhat startled, on looking out, to find himself accompanied by two mounted musketeers on each side of the carriage, but they proved to have been intended as a protective escort. He was brought to the recorder's house, whence, after some delay, he was conveyed to the palace. Here he was received by an unknown and silent attendant, who took him by the hand and led him through entirely deserted corridors and halls. Not a human being was seen nor a sound heard until his conductor at last reached the door of an inner apartment through which he ushered him, without speaking a syllable.[42] The monk then found himself in the presence of two personages, seated at a table covered with books and papers. One was in military undress, with an air about him of habitual command, a fair-complexioned man of middle age, inclining to baldness, rather stout, with a large blue eye, regular features, and a mouse-coloured beard. The other was in the velvet cloak and grave habiliments of a civil

25 Feb. 1607.

[39] Grotius, xvi. 728.
[40] Gallucci, xx. 316, 317.
[41] Wagenaar, ix. 272
[42] Gallucci, *ubi sup.*

functionary, apparently sixty years of age, with a massive forehead, heavy features, and a shaggy beard. The soldier was Maurice of Nassau, the statesman was John of Olden-Barneveld.

Both rose as the friar entered, and greeted him with cordiality.

"But," said the prince, "how did you dare to enter the Hague, relying only on the word of a Beggar?"

"Who would not confide," replied Neyen, "in the word of so exalted, so respectable a Beggar as you, O most excellent prince?"[43]

With these facetious words began the negotiations through which an earnest attempt was at last to be made for terminating a seemingly immortal war. The conversation, thus begun, rolled amicably and informally along. The monk produced letters from the archdukes, in which, as he stated, the truly royal soul of the writers shone conspicuously forth. Without a thought for their own advantage, he observed, and moved only by a contemplation of the tears shed by so many thousands of human beings reduced to extreme misery, their Highnesses, although they were such exalted princes, cared nothing for what would be said by the kings of Europe and all the potentates of the universe about their excessive indulgence.[44]

"What indulgence do you speak of?" asked the stadholder.

"Does that seem a trifling indulgence," replied John Neyen, "that they are willing to abandon the right which they inherited from their ancestors over these provinces, to allow it so easily to slip from their fingers, to declare these people to be free, over whom, as their subjects refusing the yoke, they have carried on war so long?"

"It is our right hands that have gained this liberty," said Maurice, "not the archdukes that have granted it. It has been acquired by our treasure, poured forth how freely! by the price of our blood, by so many thousands of souls sent to

[43] Gallucci, 317. [44] Ibid.

their account. Alas, how dear a price have we paid for it! All the potentates of Christendom, save the King of Spain alone, with his relatives the archdukes, have assented to our independence. In treating for peace we ask no gift of freedom from the archdukes. We claim to be regarded by them as what we are—free men. If they are unwilling to consider us as such, let them subject us to their dominion if they can. And as we have hitherto done, we shall contend more fiercely for liberty than for life." [45]

With this, the tired monk was dismissed to sleep off the effects of his journey and of the protracted discussion, being warmly recommended to the captain of the citadel, by whom he was treated with every possible consideration.

Several days of private discussion ensued between Neyen and the leading personages of the republic. The emissary was looked upon with great distrust. All schemes of substantial negotiation were regarded by the public as visions, while the monk on his part felt the need of all his tact and temper to wind his way out of the labyrinth into which he felt that he had perhaps too heedlessly entered. A false movement on his part would involve himself and his masters in a hopeless maze of suspicion, and make a pacific result impossible.

At length, it having been agreed to refer the matter to the States-General, Recorder Aerssens waited upon Neyen to demand his credentials for negotiation. He replied that he had been forbidden to deliver his papers, but that he was willing to exhibit them to the States-General.

He came accordingly to that assembly, and was respectfully received. All the deputies rose, and he was placed in a seat near the presiding officer. Olden-Barneveld then in a few words told him why he had been summoned. The monk begged that a want of courtesy might not be imputed to him, as he had been sent to negotiate with three individuals, not with a great assembly.

[45] Gallucci, 317, *et seqq.*, who wrote from the original letters and journals of Neyen, Spinola, and many others.

Thus already the troublesome effect of publicity upon diplomacy was manifesting itself. The many-headed, many-tongued republic was a difficult creature to manage, adroit as the negotiator had proved himself to be in gliding through the cabinets and council-chambers of princes and dealing with the important personages found there.

The power was, however, produced, and handed around the assembly, the signature and seals being duly inspected by the members. Neyen was then asked if he had anything to say in public. He replied in the negative, adding only a few vague commonplaces about the effusion of blood and the desire of the archdukes for the good of mankind. He was then dismissed.

A few days afterwards a committee of five from the States-General, of which Barneveld was chairman, conferred with Neyen. He was informed that the paper exhibited by him was in many respects objectionable, and that they had therefore drawn up a form which he was requested to lay before the archdukes for their guidance in making out a new power. He was asked also whether the king of Spain was a party to these proposals for negotiation. The monk answered that he was not informed of the fact, but that he considered it highly probable.[46]

John Neyen then departed for Brussels with the form prescribed by the States-General in his pocket. Nothing could exceed the indignation with which the royalists and Catholics at the court of the archdukes were inspired by the extreme arrogance and obstinacy thus manifested by the rebellious heretics. That the offer on the part of their master to negotiate should be received by them with cavils, and almost with contempt, was as great an offence as their original revolt. That the servant should dare to prescribe a form for the sovereign to copy seemed to prove that the world was coming to an end. But it was ever thus with the vulgar, said the courtiers and church dignitaries, debating these matters. The insanity of plebeians was always enormous, and never more so

[46] Gallucci, *ubi sup.*

than when fortune for a moment smiled.[47] Full of arrogance and temerity when affairs were prosperous, plunged in abject cowardice when dangers and reverses came—such was the People—such it must ever be.

Thus blustered the priests and the parasites surrounding the archduke, nor need their sentiments amaze us. Could those honest priests and parasites have ever dreamed, before the birth of this upstart republic, that merchants, manufacturers, and farmers, mechanics and advocates—the People, in short—should presume to meddle with affairs of state? Their vocation had been long ago prescribed—to dig and to draw, to brew and to bake, to bear burdens in peace and to fill bloody graves in war—what better lot could they desire? Meantime their superiors, especially endowed with wisdom by the Omnipotent, would direct trade and commerce, conduct war and diplomacy, make treaties, impose taxes, fill their own pockets, and govern the universe. Was not this reasonable and according to the elemental laws? If the beasts of the field had been suddenly gifted with speech, and had constituted themselves into a free commonwealth for the management of public affairs, they would hardly have caused more profound astonishment at Brussels and Madrid than had been excited by the proceedings of the rebellious Dutchmen.

Yet it surely might have been suggested, when the lament of the courtiers over the abjectness of the People in adversity was so emphatic, that Dorp and Van Loon, Berendrecht and Gieselles, with the men under their command, who had disputed every inch of Little Troy for three years and three months, and had covered those fatal sands with a hundred thousand corpses, had not been giving of late such evidence of the People's cowardice in reverses as theory required. The siege of Ostend had been finished only three years

[47] "Sempre son grandi le insanie del volgo ma più allora che gli arride l'aura festigiante della fortuna. Pieno d'arroganza e di temerità nelle cose proprie, tutto abjettione e vilta all' incontro poi nelle avverse."—Bentivoglio, P. iii. 554.

before, and it is strange that its lessons should so soon have been forgotten.

It was thought best, however, to dissemble. Diplomacy in those days—certainly the diplomacy of Spain and Rome—meant simply dissimulation. Moreover, that solid apothegm, *hæreticis non servanda fides*, the most serviceable anchor ever forged for true believers, was always ready to be thrown out, should storm or quicksand threaten, during the intricate voyage to be now undertaken.

John Neyen soon returned to the Hague, having persuaded his masters that it was best to affect compliance with the preliminary demand of the States. During the discussions in regard to peace, it would not be dangerous to treat with the rebel provinces as with free states, over which the archdukes pretended to no authority, because—so it was secretly argued—this was to be understood with a sense of similitude. "We will negotiate with them *as if they were free*," said the grey-friar to the archduke and his counsellors, "but not with the signification of true and legitimate liberty. They have laid down in their formula that we are to pretend to no authority over them. Very well. For the time being we will pretend that we do not pretend to any such authority. To negotiate with them as if they were free will not make them free. It is no recognition by us that they are free. Their liberty could never be acquired by their rebellion.[48] This is so manifest that neither the king nor the archdukes can lose any of their rights over the United Provinces, even should they make this declaration."[49]

Thus the hair-splitters at Brussels—spinning a web that should be stout enough to entrap the noisy, blundering republicans at the Hague, yet so delicate as to go through the finest dialectical needle. Time was to show whether subtilty or bluntness was the best diplomatic material.

The monk brought with him three separate instruments or

[48] "Ciò si sarebbe dovuto sempre intendere con senso di similitudine ciò e come se fossero libere e non con significazione di vera e legitima libertà." —Bentivoglio, III. 552.

[49] Ibid.

powers, to be used according to his discretion. Admitted to the assembly of the States-General, he produced number one. It was instantly rejected. He then offered number two, with the same result. He now declared himself offended, not on his own account, but for the sake of his masters, and asked leave to retire from the assembly, leaving with them the papers which had been so benignantly drawn up, and which deserved to be more carefully studied.[50]

The States, on their parts, were sincerely and vehemently indignant. What did all this mean, it was demanded, this producing one set of propositions after another? Why did the archdukes not declare their intentions openly and at once? Let the States depart each to the several provinces, and let John Neyen be instantly sent out of the country. Was it thought to bait a trap for the ingenuous Netherlanders, and catch them little by little, like so many wild animals? This was not the way the States dealt with the archdukes. What they meant they put in front—first, last, and always. Now and in the future they said and they would say exactly what they wished, candidly and seriously. Those who pursued another course would never come into negotiation with them.[51]

The monk felt that he had excited a wrath which it would be difficult to assuage. He already perceived the difference between a real and an affected indignation, and tried to devise some soothing remedy. Early next morning he sent a petition in writing to the States for leave to make an explanation to the assembly. Barneveld and Recorder Aerssens, in consequence, came to him immediately, and heaped invectives upon his head for his duplicity.[52]

Evidently it was a different matter dealing with this many-headed roaring beast, calling itself a republic, from managing the supple politicians with whom he was more familiar. The noise and publicity of these transactions were already somewhat appalling to the smooth friar who was accustomed to negotiate in comfortable secrecy. He now vehemently protested that

[50] Gallucci, 318-325, from Neyen's Letters and Journals.
[51] Ibid. [52] Ibid.

never man was more sincere than he, and implored for time to send to Brussels for another power. It is true that number three was still in his portfolio, but he had seen so much indignation on the production of number two as to feel sure that the fury of the States would know no bounds should he now confess that he had come provided with a third.

It was agreed accordingly to wait eight days, in which period he might send for and receive the new power already in his possession. These little tricks were considered masterly diplomacy in those days, and by this kind of negotiators; and such was the way in which it was proposed to terminate a half century of warfare.[53] The friar wrote to his masters, not of course to ask for a new power, but to dilate on the difficulties to be anticipated in procuring that which the losing party is always most bent upon in circumstances like these, and which was most ardently desired by the archdukes—an armistice. He described Prince Maurice as sternly opposed to such a measure, believing that temporary cessation of hostilities was apt to be attended with mischievous familiarity between the opposing camps, with relaxation of discipline, desertion, and various kinds of treachery, and that there was no better path to peace than that which was trampled by contending hosts.

Seven days passed, and then Neyen informed the States that he had at last received a power which he hoped would prove satisfactory. Being admitted accordingly to the assembly, he delivered an eloquent eulogy upon the sincerity of the archdukes, who, with perhaps too little regard for their own dignity and authority, had thus, for the sake of the public good, so benignantly conceded what the States had demanded.

Barneveld, on receiving the new power, handed to Neyen a draught of an agreement which he was to study at his leisure, and in which he might suggest alterations. At the same time it was demanded that within three months the written consent of the King of Spain to the proposed negotiations should be

[53] The narrative is the monk's own, as preserved by his admirer, the Jesuit Gallucci, (*ubi sup.*)

produced. The Franciscan objected that it did not comport with the dignity of the archdukes to suppose the consent of any other sovereign needful to confirm their acts. Barneveld insisted with much vehemence on the necessity of this condition. It was perfectly notorious, he said, that the armies commanded by the archdukes were subject to the King of Spain, and were called royal armies. Prince Maurice observed that all prisoners taken by him had uniformly called themselves soldiers of the Crown, not of the archdukes, nor of Marquis Spinola.[54]

Barneveld added that the royal power over the armies in the Netherlands and over the obedient provinces was proved by the fact that all commanders of regiments, all governors of fortresses, especially of Antwerp, Ghent, Cambray, and the like, were appointed by the King of Spain. These were royal citadels, with royal garrisons. That without the knowledge and consent of the King of Spain it would be impossible to declare the people of the United Provinces free, was obvious; for in the cession by Philip II. of all the Netherlands it was provided that, without the consent of the king, no part of that territory could be ceded, and this on pain of forfeiting all the sovereignty. To treat without the king was therefore impossible.

The Franciscan denied that because the sovereigns of Spain sent funds and auxiliary troops to Flanders, and appointed military commanders there of various degrees, the authority of the archdukes was any the less supreme. Philip II. had sent funds and troops to sustain the League, but he was not King of France.

Barneveld probably thought it not worth his while to reply that Philip, with those funds and those troops, had done his best to become King of France, and that his failure proved nothing for the argument either way.

Neyen then returned once more to Brussels, observing as he took leave that the decision of the archdukes as to the king's consent was very doubtful, although he was sure that

[54] Gallucci, *ubi sup.*

the best thing for all parties would be to agree to an armistice out of hand.

This, however, was far from being the opinion of the States or the stadholder.

After conferring with his masters, the monk came down by agreement from Antwerp to the Dutch ships which lay in the Scheld before Fort Lillo. On board one of these, Dirk van der Does had been stationed with a special commission from the States to compare documents. It was expressly ordered that in these preliminary negotiations neither party was to go on shore.[55] On a comparison of the agreement brought by Neyen from Brussels with the draught furnished by Barneveld, of which Van der Does had a copy, so many discrepancies appeared that the document of the archdukes was at once rejected. But of course the monk had a number two, and this, after some trouble, was made to agree with the prescribed form. Brother John then, acting upon what he considered the soundest of principles—that no job was so difficult as not to be accomplished with the help of the precious metals—offered his fellow negotiator a valuable gold chain as a present from the archdukes.[56] Dirk van der Does accepted the chain, but gave notice of the fact to his Government.

The monk now became urgent to accompany his friend to the Hague, but this had been expressly forbidden by the States. Neyen felt sure, he said, of being able by arguments, which he could present by word of mouth, to overcome the opposition to the armistice were he once more to be admitted to the assembly. Van der Does had already much overstaid his appointed time, bound to the spot, as it were, by the golden chain thrown around him by the excellent friar,[57] and he now, in violation of orders, wrote to the Hague for leave to comply with this request. Pending the answer, the persuasive Neyen convinced him, much against his will, that they might both go together as far as Delft. To Delft they accordingly went;

[55] Gallucci, 322.

[56] "Optime quippe norant negotium nullum esse tam arduum quod auri ope non conficiatur."—Ibid. Compare Wagenaar, ix. 249.

[57] "Quasi valde tenaciter aurea illa catena Neyo devinctus."—Gallucci, 323.

but, within half a league of that place, met a courier with strict orders that the monk was at once to return to Brussels. Brother John was in great agitation. Should he go back, the whole negotiation might come to nought; should he go on, he might be clapped into prison as a spy. Being conscious, however, that his services as a spy were intended to be the most valuable part of his mission, he resolved to proceed in that capacity.[58] So he persuaded his friend Dirk to hide him in the hold of a canal-boat. Van der Does was in great trepidation himself, but on reaching the Hague and giving up his gold chain to Barneveld, he made his peace, and obtained leave for the trembling but audacious friar to come out of his hiding-place.

Appearing once more before the States-General on the afternoon of 7th May,[59] Neyen urged with much eloquence the propriety of an immediate armistice both by sea and land, insisting that it would be a sanguinary farce to establish a cessation of hostilities upon one element while blood and treasure were profusely flowing on the ocean.[60] There were potent reasons for this earnestness on the part of the monk to procure a truce to maritime operations, as very soon was to be made evident to the world. Meantime, on this renewed visit, the negotiator expressed himself as no longer doubtful in regard to the propriety of requesting the Spanish king's consent to the proposed negotiations. That consent, however, would in his opinion depend upon the earnestness now to be manifested by the States in establishing the armistice by sea and land, and upon their promptness in recalling the fleets now infesting the coast of Spain. No immediate answer was given to these representations, but Neyen was requested to draw up his argument in writing, in order that it might be duly pondered by the States of the separate provinces.

The radical defect of the Dutch constitution—the independent sovereignty claimed by each one of the provinces

[58] "Op dat hy den staat der vereinigden Landen van naby doorsnuffelen zou en heimelyk arbeiden tot bevordering van den handel."—Wagenaar, ix. 249. Cf. Van der Kemp, iii. 12.

[59] Van der Kemp, iii. 119.

[60] Gallucci, 324. Van der Kemp, iii. 118. Grotius, xvi. 745.

composing the confederation, each of those provinces on its part being composed of cities, each again claiming something very like sovereignty for itself—could not fail to be manifested whenever great negotiations with foreign powers were to be undertaken. To obtain the unanimous consent of seven independent little republics was a work of difficulty, requiring immense expenditure of time in comparatively unimportant contingencies. How intolerable might become the obstructions, the dissensions, and the delays, now that a series of momentous and world-wide transactions was beginning, on the issue of which the admission of a new commonwealth into the family of nations, the international connections of all the great powers of Christendom, the commerce of the world, and the peace of Europe depended.

Yet there was no help for it but to make the best present use of the institutions which time and great events had bestowed upon the young republic, leaving to a more convenient season the task of remodelling the law. Meanwhile, with men who knew their own minds, who meant to speak the truth, and who were resolved to gather in at last the harvest honestly and bravely gained by nearly a half-century of hard fighting, it would be hard for a legion of friars, with their heads full of quirks and their wallets full of bills of exchange, to carry the day for despotism.

Barneveld was sincerely desirous of peace. He was well aware that his province of Holland, where he was an intellectual autocrat, was staggering under the burden of one half the expenses of the whole republic. He knew that Holland in the course of the last nine years, notwithstanding the constantly heightened rate of impost on all objects of ordinary consumption, was twenty-six millions of florins behindhand, and that she had reason therefore to wish for peace.[61] The great Advocate, than whom no statesman in Europe could more accurately scan the world's horizon, was convinced that the propitious moment for honourable straightforward nego-

[61] Remonstr. van Olden-Barneveld in Leven van Olden-Barneveld, bl. 157. Wagenaar, ix. 241.

tiations to secure peace, independence, and free commerce, free religion and free government, had come, and he had succeeded in winning the reluctant Maurice into a partial adoption, at least, of his opinions.[62]

The Franciscan remained at Delft, waiting, by direction of the States, for an answer to his propositions, and doing his best according to the instructions of his own Government to espy the condition and sentiments of the enemy. Becoming anxious after the lapse of a fortnight, he wrote to Barneveld. In reply the Advocate twice sent a secret messenger, urging him to be patient, assuring him that the affair was working well; that the opposition to peace came chiefly from Zeeland and from certain parties in Amsterdam vehemently opposed to peace or truce; but that the rest of Holland was decidedly in favour of the negotiations.[63]

A few days passed, and Neyen was again summoned before the assembly. Barneveld now informed him that the Dutch fleet would be recalled from the coast of Spain so soon as the consent of his Catholic Majesty to the negotiations arrived, but that it would be necessary to confine the cessation of naval warfare within certain local limits. Both these conditions were strenuously opposed by the Franciscan, who urged that the consent of the Spanish king was certain, but that this new proposition to localize the maritime armistice would prove to be fraught with endless difficulties and dangers. Barneveld and the States remaining firm, however, and giving him a formal communication of their decision in writing, Neyen had nothing for it but to wend his way back rather malcontent to Brussels.

It needed but a brief deliberation at the court of the archdukes to bring about the desired arrangement. The desire for an armistice, especially for a cessation of hostilities by sea, had been marvellously stimulated by an event to be narrated in the next chapter. Meantime, more than the first three months of the year had been passed in these secret preliminary transactions, and so softly had the stealthy friar sped to

[62] Wagenaar, ix. 241. Grotius, xviii. [63] Gallucci, 326, 327.

and fro between Brussels and the Hague, that when at last the armistice was announced it broke forth like a sudden flash of fine weather in the midst of a raging storm. No one at the archduke's court knew of the mysterious negotiations save the monk himself, Spinola, Richardot, Verreycken, the chief auditor, and one or two others.[64] The great Belgian nobles, from whom everything had been concealed, were very wroth, but the Belgian public was as much delighted as amazed at the prospects of peace. In the United Provinces opinions were conflicting, but doubtless joy and confidence were the prevailing emotions.

Towards the middle of April the armistice was publicly announced. It was to last for eight months from the 4th of May. During this period no citadels were to be besieged, no camps brought near a city, no new fortifications built, and all troops were to be kept carefully within walls. Meantime commissioners were to be appointed by the archdukes to confer with an equal number of deputies of the United Provinces for peace or for a truce of ten, fifteen, or twenty years, on the express ground that the archdukes regarded the United Provinces as free countries, over which their Highnesses pretended to no authority.[65]

The armistice on land was absolute. On sea, hostilities were to cease in the German Ocean and in the channel between England and France, while it was also provided that the Netherland fleet should, within a certain period, be recalled from the Spanish coast.

A day of public fast, humiliation, thanksgiving, and prayer was ordered throughout the republic for the 9th of May, in order to propitiate the favour of Heaven on the great work to be undertaken ; and, as a further precaution, Prince Maurice ordered all garrisons in the strong places to be doubled, lest the slippery enemy should take advantage of too much confidence reposed in his good faith. The preachers throughout the commonwealth, each according to his individual bias,

[64] Meteren, 551vo. Gallucci, 325.
[65] Meteren, 551. Gallucci, 326. Grotius, xvi. 738. Wagenaar, ix. 250, *et seq.*

improved the occasion by denouncing the Spaniard from their pulpits and inflaming the popular hatred against the ancient enemy, or by dilating on the blessings of peace and the horrors of war.[66] The peace party and the war party, the believers in Barneveld and the especial adherents of Prince Maurice, seemed to divide the land in nearly equal portions.

While the Netherlands, both rebellious and obedient, were filled with these various emotions, the other countries of Europe were profoundly amazed at the sudden revelation. It was on the whole regarded as a confession of impotence on the part of Spain that the archdukes should now prepare to send envoys to the revolted provinces as to a free and independent people. Universal monarchy, brought to such a pass as this, was hardly what had been expected after the tremendous designs and the grandiloquent language on which the world had so long been feeding as its daily bread. The spectacle of anointed monarchs thus far humbling themselves to the people—of rebellion dictating terms, instead of writhing in dust at the foot of the throne—was something new in history. The heavens and earth might soon be expected to pass away, now that such a catastrophe was occurring.

The King of France had also been kept in ignorance of these events. It was impossible, however, that the negotiations could go forward without his consent and formal participation. Accordingly on receiving the news he appointed an especial mission to the Hague—President Jeannin and De Russy, besides his regular resident ambassador Buzanval. Meantime startling news reached the republic in the early days of May.

[66] Wagenaar, ix. 251.

CHAPTER XLVII.

A Dutch fleet under Heemskerk sent to the coast of Spain and Portugal — Encounter with the Spanish war-fleet under D'Avila — Death of both commanders-in-chief — Victory of the Netherlanders — Massacre of the Spaniards.

THE States-General had not been inclined to be tranquil under the check which Admiral Haultain had received upon the coast of Spain in the autumn of 1606. The deed of terrible self-devotion by which Klaaszoon and his comrades had in that crisis saved the reputation of the republic, had proved that her fleets needed only skilful handling and determined leaders to conquer their enemy in the Western seas as certainly as they had done in the archipelagos of the East. And there was one pre-eminent naval commander, still in the very prime of life, but seasoned by an experience at the poles and in the tropics such as few mariners in that early but expanding maritime epoch could boast. Jacob van Heemskerk, unlike many of the navigators and ocean warriors who had made and were destined to make the Orange flag of the United Provinces illustrious over the world, was not of humble parentage. Sprung of an ancient, knightly race, which had frequently distinguished itself in his native province of Holland, he had followed the seas almost from his cradle. By turns a commercial voyager, an explorer, a privateer's-man, or an admiral of war-fleets, in days when sharp distinctions between the merchant service and the public service, corsairs' work and cruisers' work, did not exist, he had ever proved himself equal to any emergency—a man incapable of fatigue, of perplexity, or of fear. We have followed his career during that awful winter in Nova Zembla, where, with such unflinching cheerful heroism, he sustained the courage of his comrades—the

first band of scientific martyrs that had ever braved the dangers and demanded the secrets of those arctic regions. His glorious name—as those of so many of his comrades and countrymen—has been rudely torn from cape, promontory, island, and continent, once illustrated by courage and suffering, but the noble record will ever remain.[1]

Subsequently he had much navigated the Indian ocean; his latest achievement having been, with two hundred men, in a couple of yachts, to capture an immense Portuguese carrack, mounting thirty guns, and manned with eight hundred sailors, and to bring back a prodigious booty for the exchequer of the republic. A man with delicate features, large brown eyes, a thin high nose, fair hair and beard, and a soft, gentle expression, he concealed, under a quiet exterior, and on ordinary occasions a very plain and pacific costume, a most daring nature, and an indomitable ambition for military and naval distinction.

He was the man of all others in the commonwealth to lead any new enterprise that audacity could conceive against the hereditary enemy.

The public and the States-General were anxious to retrace the track of Haultain, and to efface the memory of his inglorious return from the Spanish coast. The sailors of Holland and Zeeland were indignant that the richly freighted fleets of the two Indies had been allowed to slip so easily through their fingers. The great East India Corporation was importunate with Government that such blunders should not be repeated, and that the armaments known to be preparing in the Portuguese ports, the homeward-bound fleets that might be looked for at any moment off the peninsular coast, and the Spanish cruisers which were again preparing to molest the merchant fleets of the Company, should be dealt with effectively and in season.

Twenty-six vessels of small size but of good sailing qualities,

[1] For a full and learned dissertation on the causes of the oblivion into which the early Dutch voyages have fallen see in particular Bennet and Van Wyk, 111; Hoofdstuk, 156, *et seq.*

according to the idea of the epoch, were provided, together with four tenders. Of this fleet the command was offered to Jacob van Heemskerk. He accepted with alacrity, expressing with his usual quiet self-confidence the hope that, living or dead, his fatherland would have cause to thank him. Inspired only by the love of glory, he asked for no remuneration for his services save thirteen per cent. of the booty, after half a million florins should have been paid into the public treasury. It was hardly probable that this would prove a large share of prize money, while considerable victories alone could entitle him to receive a stiver.

The expedition sailed in the early days of April for the coast of Spain and Portugal, the admiral having full discretion to do anything that might in his judgment redound to the advantage of the republic. Next in command was the vice-admiral of Zeeland, Laurenz Alteras. Another famous seaman in the fleet was Captain Henry Janszoon of Amsterdam, commonly called Long Harry, while the weather-beaten and well-beloved Admiral Lambert, familiarly styled by his countrymen "Pretty Lambert," some of whose achievements have already been recorded in these pages, was the comrade of all others upon whom Heemskerk most depended.[2] After the 10th April the admiral, lying off and on near the mouth of the Tagus, sent a lugger in trading disguise to reconnoitre that river. He ascertained by his spies, sent in this and subsequently in other directions, as well as by occasional merchantmen spoken with at sea, that the Portuguese fleet for India would not be ready to sail for many weeks; that no valuable argosies were yet to be looked for from America, but that a great war-fleet, comprising many galleons of the largest size, was at that very moment cruising in the Straits of Gibraltar. Such of the Netherland traders as were returning from the Levant, as well as those designing to enter the Mediterranean, were likely to fall prizes to this formidable enemy. The heart of Jacob Heemskerk danced for joy. He had come forth for glory, not for booty, and here was what he

[2] Wagenaar, ix. 252.

had scarcely dared to hope for—a powerful antagonist instead of peaceful, scarcely resisting, but richly-laden merchantmen. The accounts received were so accurate as to assure him that the Gibraltar fleet was far superior to his own in size of vessels, weight of metal, and number of combatants. The circumstances only increased his eagerness. The more he was over-matched, the greater would be the honour of victory, and he steered for the straits, tacking to and fro in the teeth of a strong head-wind.

On the morning of the 25th April he was in the narrowest part of the mountain-channel, and learned that the whole Spanish fleet was in the Bay of Gibraltar. 25 April. The marble pillar of Hercules rose before him. Heemskerk was of a poetic temperament, and his imagination was inflamed by the spectacle which met his eyes. Geographical position, splendour of natural scenery, immortal fable, and romantic history, had combined to throw a spell over that region. It seemed marked out for perpetual illustration by human valour. The deeds by which, many generations later, those localities were to become identified with the fame of a splendid empire—then only the most energetic rival of the young republic, but destined under infinitely better geographical conditions to follow on her track of empire, and with far more prodigious results—were still in the womb of futurity. But St. Vincent, Trafalgar, Gibraltar—words which were one day to stir the English heart, and to conjure heroic English shapes from the depths so long as history endures—were capes and promontories already familiar to legend and romance.

Those Netherlanders had come forth from their slender little fatherland to offer battle at last within his own harbours and under his own fortresses to the despot who aspired to universal monarchy, and who claimed the lordship of the seas. The Hollanders and Zeelanders had gained victories on the German Ocean, in the Channel, throughout the Indies, but now they were to measure strength with the ancient enemy in this most conspicuous theatre, and before the eyes of

Christendom. It was on this famous spot that the ancient demigod had torn asunder by main strength the continents of Europe and Africa. There stood the opposite fragments of the riven mountain-chain, Calpe and Abyla, gazing at each other, in eternal separation, across the gulf, emblems of those two antagonistic races which the terrible hand of Destiny has so ominously disjoined. Nine centuries before, the African king, Moses son of Nuzir, and his lieutenant, Tarik son of Abdallah, had crossed that strait and burned the ships which brought them. Black Africa had conquered a portion of whiter Europe, and laid the foundation of the deadly mutual repugnance which nine hundred years of bloodshed had heightened into insanity of hatred. Tarik had taken the town and mountain, Carteia and Calpe, and given to both his own name. Gib-al-Tarik, the cliff of Tarik, they are called to this day.

Within the two horns of that beautiful bay, and protected by the fortress on the precipitous rock, lay the Spanish fleet at anchor. There were ten galleons of the largest size, besides lesser war-vessels and carracks, in all twenty-one sail. The admiral commanding was Don Juan Alvarez d'Avila, a veteran who had fought at Lepanto under Don John of Austria. His son was captain of his flag-ship, the St. Augustine. The vice-admiral's galleon was called 'Our Lady of La Vega,' the rear-admiral's was the 'Mother of God,' and all the other ships were baptized by the holy names deemed most appropriate, in the Spanish service, to deeds of carnage.

On the other hand, the nomenclature of the Dutch ships suggested a menagerie. There was the Tiger, the Sea Dog, the Griffin, the Red Lion, the Golden Lion, the Black Bear, the White Bear; these, with the Æolus and the Morning Star, were the leading vessels of the little fleet.

On first attaining a distant view of the enemy, Heemskerk summoned all the captains on board his flag-ship, the Æolus, and addressed them in a few stirring words.

"It is difficult," he said, "for Netherlanders not to conquer on

salt water.[3] Our fathers have gained many a victory in distant seas, but it is for us to tear from the enemy's list of titles his arrogant appellation of Monarch of the Ocean. Here, on the verge of two continents, Europe is watching our deeds, while the Moors of Africa are to learn for the first time in what estimation they are to hold the Batavian republic. Remember that you have no choice between triumph and destruction. I have led you into a position whence escape is impossible—and I ask of none of you more than I am prepared to do myself — whither I am sure that you will follow. The enemy's ships are far superior to ours in bulk; but remember that their excessive size makes them difficult to handle and easier to hit, while our own vessels are entirely within control. Their decks are swarming with men, and thus there will be more certainty that our shot will take effect. Remember, too, that we are all sailors, accustomed from our cradles to the ocean; while yonder Spaniards are mainly soldiers and landsmen, qualmish at the smell of bilge-water, and sickening at the roll of the waves.[4] This day begins a long list of naval victories, which will make our fatherland for ever illustrious, or lay the foundation of an honourable peace, by placing, through our triumph, in the hands of the States-General, the power of dictating its terms."

His comrades long remembered the enthusiasm which flashed from the man, usually so gentle and composed in demeanour, so simple in attire. Clad in complete armour, with the orange-plumes waving from his casque and the orange-scarf across his breast, he stood there in front of the mainmast of the Æolus, the very embodiment of an ancient Viking.

He then briefly announced his plan of attack. It was of antique simplicity. He would lay his own ship alongside

[3] Grotius, Meteren, and Wagenaar all give essentially the same report of this speech, and I am inclined to think therefore that something very like it was really spoken.

[4] "Illud vero vel præcipuum quod apud nos nautæ pugnant, apud illos milites quos ego mihi videre videor ut sunt delicati sentinæ odore ac jactatione fluctuum prope exanimes in vertiginem dari."—Grotius, 734.

that of the Spanish admiral. Pretty Lambert in the Tiger was to grapple with her on the other side. Vice-admiral Alteras and Captain Bras were to attack the enemy's vice-admiral in the same way. Thus, two by two, the little Netherland ships were to come into closest quarters with each one of the great galleons. Heemskerk would himself lead the way, and all were to follow, as closely as possible, in his wake. The oath to stand by each other was then solemnly renewed, and a parting health was drunk. The captains then returned to their ships.

As the Lepanto warrior, Don Juan d'Avila, saw the little vessels slowly moving towards him, he summoned a Hollander whom he had on board, one Skipper Gevaerts of a captured Dutch trading bark, and asked him whether those ships in the distance were Netherlanders.

"Not a doubt of it," replied the skipper.

The admiral then asked him what their purpose could possibly be, in venturing so near Gibraltar.

"Either I am entirely mistaken in my countrymen," answered Gevaerts, "or they are coming for the express purpose of offering you battle."[5]

The Spaniard laughed loud and long. The idea that those puny vessels could be bent on such a purpose seemed to him irresistibly comic, and he promised his prisoner, with much condescension, that the St. Augustine alone should sink the whole fleet.

Gevaerts, having his own ideas on the subject, but not being called upon to express them, thanked the admiral for his urbanity, and respectfully withdrew.

At least four thousand soldiers were in D'Avila's ships, besides seamen. There were seven hundred in the St. Augustine, four hundred and fifty in Our Lady of Vega, and so on in proportion. There were also one or two hundred noble volunteers who came thronging on board, scenting the battle from afar, and desirous of having a hand in the destruction of the insolent Dutchmen.

[5] Meteren, 547.

It was about one in the afternoon. There was not much wind, but the Hollanders, slowly drifting on the eternal river that pours from the Atlantic into the Mediterranean, were now very near. All hands had been piped on board every one of the ships, all had gone down on their knees in humble prayer, and the loving cup had then been passed around.[6] 25 April.

Heemskerk, leading the way towards the Spanish admiral, ordered the gunners of the Æolus not to fire until the vessels struck each other. "Wait till you hear it crack,"[7] he said, adding a promise of a hundred florins to the man who should pull down the admiral's flag. Avila, notwithstanding his previous merriment, thought it best, for the moment, to avoid the coming collision. Leaving to other galleons, which he interposed between himself and the enemy, the task of summarily sinking the Dutch fleet, he cut the cable of the St. Augustine and drifted farther into the bay. Heemskerk, not allowing himself to be foiled in his purpose, steered past two or three galleons, and came crashing against the admiral. Almost simultaneously, Pretty Lambert laid himself along her quarter on the other side. The St. Augustine fired into the Æolus as she approached, but without doing much damage. The Dutch admiral, as he was coming in contact, discharged his forward guns, and poured an effective volley of musketry into his antagonist.

The St. Augustine fired again, straight across the centre of the Æolus, at a few yards' distance. A cannon-ball took off the head of a sailor, standing near Heemskerk, and carried away the admiral's leg, close to the body. He fell on deck, and, knowing himself to be mortally wounded, implored the next in command on board, Captain Verhoef, to fight his ship to the last, and to conceal his death from the rest of the fleet. Then prophesying a glorious victory for the republic, and piously commending his soul to his Maker, he soon breathed his last. A cloak was thrown over him,

[6] Meteren, Wagenaar, Grotius.

[7] "En dat sy het hoorden kraaken."—Meteren, 547vo.

and the battle raged. The few who were aware that the noble Heemskerk was gone, burned to avenge his death, and to obey the dying commands of their beloved chief. The rest of the Hollanders believed themselves under his directing influence, and fought as if his eyes were upon them. Thus the spirit of the departed hero still watched over and guided the battle.

The Æolus now fired a broadside into her antagonist, making fearful havoc, and killing Admiral D'Avila. The commanders-in-chief of both contending fleets had thus fallen at the very beginning of the battle. While the St. Augustine was engaged in deadly encounter, yard-arm and yard-arm, with the Æolus and the Tiger, Vice-admiral Alteras had, however, not carried out his part of the plan. Before he could succeed in laying himself alongside of the Spanish vice-admiral, he had been attacked by two galleons. Three other Dutch ships, however, attacked the vice-admiral, and, after an obstinate combat, silenced all her batteries and set her on fire. Her conquerors were then obliged to draw off rather hastily, and to occupy themselves for a time in extinguishing their own burning sails, which had taken fire from the close contact with their enemy. Our Lady of Vega, all ablaze from top-gallant-mast to quarter-deck, floated helplessly about, a spectre of flame, her guns going off wildly, and her crew dashing themselves into the sea, in order to escape by drowning from a fiery death. She was consumed to the water's edge.

Meantime, Vice-admiral Alteras had successively defeated both his antagonists; drifting in with them until almost under the guns of the fortress, but never leaving them until, by his superior gunnery and seamanship, he had sunk one of them, and driven the other a helpless wreck on shore.

Long Harry, while Alteras had been thus employed, had engaged another great galleon, and set her on fire. She, too, was thoroughly burned to her hulk; but Admiral Harry was killed.

By this time, although it was early of an April afternoon, and heavy clouds of smoke, enveloping the combatants pent

together in so small a space, seemed to make an atmosphere of midnight, as the flames of the burning galleons died away. There was a difficulty, too, in bringing all the Netherland ships into action—several of the smaller ones having been purposely stationed by Heemskerk on the edge of the bay to prevent the possible escape of any of the Spaniards. While some of these distant ships were crowding sail, in order to come to closer quarters, now that the day seemed going against the Spaniards, a tremendous explosion suddenly shook the air. One of the largest galleons, engaged in combat with a couple of Dutch vessels, had received a hot shot full in her powder magazine, and blew up with all on board. The blazing fragments drifted about among the other ships, and two more were soon on fire, their guns going off and their magazines exploding. The rock of Gibraltar seemed to reel. To the murky darkness succeeded the intolerable glare of a new and vast conflagration. The scene in that narrow roadstead was now almost infernal. It seemed, said an eye-witness, as if heaven and earth were passing away. A hopeless panic seized the Spaniards. The battle was over. The St. Augustine still lay in the deadly embrace of her antagonists, but all the other galleons were sunk or burned. Several of the lesser war-ships had also been destroyed. It was nearly sunset. The St. Augustine at last ran up a white flag, but it was not observed in the fierceness of the last moments of combat; the men from the Æolus and the Tiger making a simultaneous rush on board the vanquished foe.

The fight was done, but the massacre was at its beginning. The trumpeter of Captain Kleinsorg clambered like a monkey up the mast of the St. Augustine, hauled down the admiral's flag, the last which was still waving, and gained the hundred florins. The ship was full of dead and dying; but a brutal, infamous butchery now took place. Some Netherland prisoners were found in the hold, who related that two messengers had been successively despatched to take their lives, as they lay there in chains, and that each had been shot, as he made his way towards the execution of the orders.

This information did not chill the ardour of their victorious countrymen. No quarter was given. Such of the victims as succeeded in throwing themselves overboard, out of the St. Augustine, or any of the burning or sinking ships, were pursued by the Netherlanders, who rowed about among them in boats, shooting, stabbing, and drowning their victims by hundreds. It was a sickening spectacle. The bay, said those who were there, seemed sown with corpses. Probably two or three thousand were thus put to death, or had met their fate before. Had the chivalrous Heemskerk lived, it is possible that he might have stopped the massacre. But the thought of the grief which would fill the commonwealth when the news should arrive of his death—thus turning the joy of the great triumph into lamentations—increased the animosity of his comrades. Moreover, in ransacking the Spanish admiral's ship, all his papers had been found, among them many secret instructions from Government signed "I, the King;" ordering most inhuman persecutions, not only of the Netherlanders, but of all who should in any way assist them, at sea or ashore. Recent examples of the thorough manner in which the royal admirals could carry out these bloody instructions had been furnished by the hangings, burnings, and drownings of Fazardo. But the barbarous ferocity of the Dutch on this occasion might have taught a lesson even to the comrades of Alva.

The fleet of Avila was entirely destroyed. The hulk of the St. Augustine drifted ashore, having been abandoned by the victors, and was set on fire by a few Spaniards who had concealed themselves on board, lest she might fall again into the enemy's hands.

The battle had lasted from half-past three until sunset. The Dutch vessels remained all the next day on the scene of their triumph. The townspeople were discerned, packing up their goods, and speeding panic-struck into the interior. Had Heemskerk survived he would doubtless have taken Gibraltar —fortress and town—and perhaps Cadiz, such was the consternation along the whole coast.

But his gallant spirit no longer directed the fleet. Bent rather upon plunder than glory, the ships now dispersed in search of prizes towards the Azores, the Canaries, or along the Portuguese coast; having first made a brief visit to Tetuan, where they were rapturously received by the Bey.

The Hollanders lost no ships, and but one hundred seamen were killed. Two vessels were despatched homeward directly, one with sixty wounded sailors, the other with the embalmed body of the fallen Heemskerk. The hero was honoured with a magnificent funeral in Amsterdam at the public expense—the first instance in the history of the republic—and his name was enrolled on the most precious page of her records.[8]

[8] The chief authorities for this remarkable battle are Meteren, 547, 548. Grotius, xvi. 731–738. Wagenaar, ix. 251–258.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Internal condition of Spain — Character of the people — Influence of the Inquisition — Population and Revenue — Incomes of Church and Government — Degradation of Labour — Expulsion of the Moors and its consequences — Venality the special characteristic of Spanish polity — Maxims of the foreign polity of Spain — The Spanish army and navy — Insolvent state of the Government — The Duke of Lerma — His position in the State — Origin of his power — System of bribery and trafficking — Philip III. — His character — Domestic life of the king and queen.

A GLANCE at the interior condition of Spain, now that there had been more than nine years of a new reign, should no longer be deferred.

Spain was still superstitiously regarded as the leading power of the world, although foiled in all its fantastic and gigantic schemes. It was still supposed, according to current dogma, to share with the Ottoman empire the dominion of the earth.[1] A series of fortunate marriages having united many of the richest and fairest portions of Europe under a single sceptre, it was popularly believed in a period when men were not much given as yet to examine very deeply the principles of human governments or the causes of national greatness, that an aggregation of powers which had resulted from preposterous laws of succession really constituted a mighty empire, founded by genius and valour.

The Spanish people, endowed with an acute and exuberant genius, which had exhibited itself in many paths of literature, science, and art; with a singular aptitude for military adventure, organization, and achievement; with a great variety, in short, of splendid and ennobling qualities; had been, for a long succession of years, accursed with almost the very worst political institutions known to history. The depth of their misery

[1] Giro. Soranzo, Relazione.

and of their degradation was hardly yet known to themselves, and this was perhaps the most hideous proof of the tyranny of which they had been the victims. To the outward world, the hollow fabric, out of which the whole pith and strength had been slowly gnawed away, was imposing and majestic still. But the priest, the soldier, and the courtier had been busy too long, and had done their work too thoroughly, to leave much hope of arresting the universal decay.

Nor did there seem any probability that the attempt would be made.

It is always difficult to reform wide-spread abuses, even when they are acknowledged to exist, but when gigantic vices are proudly pointed to as the noblest of institutions and as the very foundations of the state, there seems nothing for the patriot to long for but the deluge.

It was acknowledged that the Spanish population—having a very large admixture of those races which, because not Catholic at heart, were stigmatized as miscreants, heretics, pagans, and, generally, as accursed—was by nature singularly prone to religious innovation.[2] Had it not been for the Holy Inquisition, it was the opinion of acute and thoughtful observers in the beginning of the seventeenth century, that the infamous heresies of Luther, Calvin, and the rest, would have long before taken possession of the land.[3] To that most blessed establishment it was owing that Spain had not polluted itself in the filth and ordure of the Reformation, and had been spared the horrible fate which had befallen large portions of Germany, France, Britain, and other barbarous northern

[2] "Li popoli per la gran mescolanza che hanno avuto coi Mori e Giudei sono molto facili a divertire dal diretto sentiero della fede."—Gir°. Soranzo Relazione. "Tremando gli Spagnuoli perchè incominciarono a colpirli l' eresia nei tempi di Filippo II. non solo nel volgo ma anche nella alta nobiltà."—S. Contarini, Relazione.

[3] "È rispettato l' inquisitore maggiore come se fosse un papa, ha il tribunal del suo officio per tutte le terre. In somma si può dire che il rigore di questo officio mantiene il rito della vera religione in Spagna che senza questo si può grandemente temere che per li tanti Moreschi e Marani che sono sparsi per il paese si vederiano per questo rispetto di religione dei movimenti e delle commozioni importanti."—Soranzo.

nations. It was conscientiously and thankfully believed in Spain, two centuries ago, that the state had been saved from political and moral ruin by that admirable machine which detected heretics with unerring accuracy, burned them when detected, and consigned their descendants to political incapacity and social infamy to the remotest generation.[4]

As the awful consequences of religious freedom, men pointed with a shudder to the condition of nations already speeding on the road to ruin, from which the two peninsulas at least had been saved. Yet the British empire, with the American republic still an embryo in its bosom, France, North Germany, and other great powers, had hardly then begun their headlong career. Whether the road of religious liberty was leading exactly to political ruin, the coming centuries were to judge.

Enough has been said in former chapters for the characterization of Philip II. and his polity. But there had now been nearly ten years of another reign. The system, inaugurated by Charles and perfected by his son, had reached its last expression under Philip III.

The evil done by father and son lived and bore plentiful fruit in the epoch of the grandson. And this is inevitable in history. No generation is long-lived enough to reap the harvest, whether of good or evil, which it sows.

Philip II. had been indefatigable in evil, a thorough believer in his supernatural mission as despot, not entirely without capacity for affairs, personally absorbed by the routine of his bureau.

He was a king, as he understood the meaning of the kingly office. His policy was continued after his death; but there was no longer a king. That important regulator to the

[4] "Con tanta vergogna ed ignominia che in eterno resta macchiata quella discendenza di infamia nè sono capaci i posteri di dignità nè di onore alcuno onde tutti procurano di vivere in maniera da non imbrattarsi in tanta lordura mantenere la Spagna libera dall' infezione dell' eresia, peste che ha infettato e rovinato gran parte del mondo," &c., &c.—Gir°. Soranzo, Relazione.

governmental machinery was wanting. How its place was supplied will soon appear.

Meantime the organic functions were performed very much in the old way. There was, at least, no lack of priests or courtiers.

Spain at this epoch had probably less than twelve millions of inhabitants, although the statistics of those days cannot be relied upon with accuracy.[5] The whole revenue of the state was nominally sixteen or seventeen millions of dollars, but the greater portion of that income was pledged for many coming years to the merchants of Genoa.[6] All the little royal devices for increasing the budget by debasing the coin of the realm, by issuing millions of copper tokens, by lowering the promised rate of interest on Government loans, by formally repudiating both interest and principal, had been tried, both in this and the preceding reign, with the usual success. An inconvertible paper currency, stimulating industry and improving morals by converting beneficent commerce into baleful gambling—that fatal invention did not then exist. Meantime, the legitimate trader and innocent citizen were harassed, and the general public endangered, as much as the limited machinery of the epoch permitted.

The available, unpledged revenue of the kingdom hardly amounted to five millions of dollars a-year. The regular annual income of the church was at least six millions.[7] The whole personal property of the nation was estimated—in a very clumsy and unsatisfactory way, no doubt—at sixty millions of dollars.[8] Thus the income of the priesthood was ten per cent. of the whole funded estate of the country, and

[5] Priuli (1604–1608) puts the population of Spain, inclusive of foreign residents, at thirteen millions (F. Priuli, Relazione). But Agostino de Blas, in his work on the population of Spain from official records, cited by N. Barozzi (Notes, s. l, vol. i. p. 353) allows but 9,680,191 inhabitants for the whole peninsula.

[6] "Sono l' entrate di S. M. come dicono da 16 milioni in circa quasi tutte impegnate e non solo impegnate ma si può dire annullate perchè sono obbligate a maggior prezzo che vagliano," &c. &c.—Ottº. Bon. Relazione. Compare Girº. Soranzo, who puts the nominal whole at seventeen millions, but "impegnate ed annihilate affatto."

[7] F. Priuli, Relazione.

[8] "Eppure la Spagna è povera non trovandosene in essa più di sessanta milioni fra capitali e robe di servizio." —Fran. Priuli, Ambas. a Filippo III. 1604–1608.

at least a million a year more than the income of the Government. Could a more biting epigram be made upon the condition to which the nation had been reduced ?

Labour was more degraded than ever. The industrious classes, if such could be said to exist, were esteemed every day more and more infamous. Merchants, shopkeepers, mechanics, were reptiles, as vilely esteemed as Jews, Moors, Protestants, or Pagans. Acquiring wealth by any kind of production was dishonourable. A grandee who should permit himself to sell the wool from his boundless sheep-walks disgraced his caste, and was accounted as low as a merchant.[9] To create was the business of slaves and miscreants : to destroy was the distinguishing attribute of Christians and nobles. To cheat, to pick, and to steal, on the most minute and the most gigantic scale—these were also among the dearest privileges of the exalted classes. No merchandize was polluting save the produce of honest industry. To sell places in church and state, the army, the navy, and the sacred tribunals of law ; to take bribes from rich and poor, high and low, in sums infinitesimal or enormous, to pillage the exchequer in every imaginable form, to dispose of titles of honour, orders of chivalry, posts in municipal council,[10] at auction ; to barter influence, audiences, official interviews against money cynically paid down in rascal counters—all this was esteemed consistent with patrician dignity.

The ministers, ecclesiastics, and those about court, obtaining a monopoly of such trade, left the business of production and circulation to their inferiors, while, as has already been sufficiently indicated, religious fanaticism and a pride of race, which nearly amounted to idiocy, had generated a scorn for labour even among the lowest orders. As a natural consequence, commerce and the mechanical arts fell almost

[9] Ibid. Compare notes of Barozzi (s. 1, vol. i. p. 351).

[10] "Quelli che governano nelle città sono chiamati Regidores e sono nelle città grandi in numero di 40 e forse più e nelle piccole in minor numero ; questi impieghi il re vende per denari e secondo i luoghi dove vanno sogliono esser venduti per 4 o 6 mille ducati ciò che porta al popolo gran danno," &c. &c.—S. Contarini.

exclusively into the hands of foreigners—Italians, English, and French—who resorted in yearly increasing numbers to Spain for the purpose of enriching themselves by the industry which the natives despised.[11]

The capital thus acquired was at regular intervals removed from the country to other lands, where wealth resulting from traffic or manufactures was not accounted infamous.

Moreover, as the soil of the country was held by a few great proprietors—an immense portion in the dead-hand of an insatiate and ever-grasping church, and much of the remainder in vast entailed estates—it was nearly impossible for the masses of the people to become owners of any portion of the land. To be an agricultural day-labourer at less than a beggar's wage could hardly be a tempting pursuit for a proud and indolent race. It was no wonder therefore that the business of the brigand, the smuggler, the professional mendicant became from year to year more attractive and more overdone; while an ever-thickening swarm of priests, friars, and nuns of every order, engendered out of a corrupt and decaying society, increasing the general indolence, immorality, and unproductive consumption, and frightfully diminishing the productive force of the country, fed like locusts upon what was left in the unhappy land. "To shirk labour, infinite numbers become priests and friars," said a good Catholic, in the year 1608.[12]

Before the end of the reign of Philip III. the peninsula, which might have been the granary of the world, did not produce food enough for its own population. Corn became a regular article of import into Spain, and would have come in larger quantities than it did had the industry of the country furnished sufficient material to exchange for necessary food.

And as if it had been an object of ambition with the priests and courtiers who then ruled a noble country, to make at exactly this epoch the most startling manifestation of human fatuity that the world had ever seen, it was now resolved by

[11] Gir°. Soranzo.

[12] "Per schivar il travaglio ed infiniti si fanno preti e frati."—Gir°. Soranzo, Ambas. a Filippo III. 1608–1611.

government to expel by armed force nearly the whole stock of intelligent and experienced labour, agricultural and mechanical, from the country. It is unnecessary to dwell long upon an event which, if it were not so familiarly known to mankind, would seem almost incredible. But the expulsion of the Moors is, alas! no exaggerated and imaginary satire, but a monument of wickedness and insanity such as is not often seen in human history.

Already, in the very first years of the century, John Ribera, archbishop of Valencia, had recommended and urged the scheme.

It was too gigantic a project to be carried into execution at once, but it was slowly matured by the aid of other ecclesiastics. At last there were indications, both human and divine, that the expulsion of these miscreants could no longer be deferred. It was rumoured and believed that a general conspiracy existed among the Moors to rise upon the Government, to institute a general massacre, and, with the assistance of their allies and relatives on the Barbary coast, to re-establish the empire of the infidels.[13]

A convoy of eighty ass-loads of oil on the way to Madrid had halted at a wayside inn. A few flasks were stolen, and those who consumed it were made sick. Some of the thieves even died, or were said to have died, in consequence.[14] Instantly the rumour flew from mouth to mouth, from town to town, that the royal family, the court, the whole capital, all Spain, were to be poisoned with that oil. If such were the scheme it was certainly a less ingenious one than the famous plot by which the Spanish Government was suspected but a few years before to have so nearly succeeded in blowing the king, peers, and commons of England into the air.

The proof of Moorish guilt was deemed all-sufficient, especially as it was supported by supernatural evidence of the most portentous and convincing kind. For several days together a dark cloud, tinged with blood-red, had been seen to hang over Valencia.[15]

[13] Giro. Soranzo. [14] Ibid. [15] Ibid., and notes of N. Barozzi.

In the neighbourhood of Daroca, a din of drums and trumpets and the clang of arms had been heard in the sky, just as a procession went out of a monastery.[16]

At Valencia the image of the Virgin had shed tears. In another place her statue had been discovered in a state of profuse perspiration.[17]

What more conclusive indications could be required as to the guilt of the Moors? What other means devised for saving crown, church, and kingdom from destruction but to expel the whole mass of unbelievers from the soil which they had too long profaned?

Archbishop Ribera was fully sustained by the Archbishop of Toledo, and the whole ecclesiastical body received energetic support from Government.

Ribera had solemnly announced that the Moors were so greedy of money, so determined to keep it, and so occupied with pursuits most apt for acquiring it, that they had come to be the sponge of Spanish wealth. The best proof of this, continued the reverend sage, was that, inhabiting in general poor little villages and sterile tracts of country, paying to the lords of the manor one third of the crops, and being overladen with special taxes imposed only upon them, they nevertheless became rich, while the Christians, cultivating the most fertile land, were in abject poverty.[18]

It seems almost incredible that this should not be satire. Certainly the most delicate irony could not portray the vicious institutions under which the magnificent territory and noble people of Spain were thus doomed to ruin more subtly and forcibly than was done by the honest brutality of this churchman. The careful tillage, the beautiful system of irrigation by aqueduct and canal, the scientific processes by which these "accursed" had caused the wilderness to bloom with cotton, sugar, and every kind of fruit and grain; the untiring industry, exquisite ingenuity, and cultivated taste by

[16] Gir°. Soranzo, and notes of N. Barozzi.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Escriba, Vida de Don Juan de Ribera, papel segundo, quoted by Lafuente, xv. 370-390.

which the merchants, manufacturers, and mechanics, guilty of a darker complexion than that of the peninsular Goths, had enriched their native land with splendid fabrics in cloth, paper, leather, silk, tapestry, and by so doing had acquired fortunes for themselves, despite iniquitous taxation, religious persecution, and social contumely—all these were crimes against a race of idlers, steeped to the lips in sloth which imagined itself to be pride.

The industrious, the intelligent, the wealthy, were denounced as criminals, and hunted to death or into exile as vermin, while the Lermas, the Ucedas, and the rest of the brood of cormorants, settled more thickly than ever around their prey.

Meantime, Government declared that the piece of four maravedis should be worth eight maravedis; the piece of two maravedis being fixed at four.[19] Thus the specie of the kingdom was to be doubled, and by means of this enlightened legislation, Spain, after destroying agriculture, commerce, and manufacture, was to maintain great armies and navies, and establish universal monarchy.

This measure, which a wiser churchman than Ribera, Cardinal Richelieu, afterwards declared the most audacious and barbarous ever recorded by history, was carried out with great regularity of organization.[20] It was ordained that the Moors should be collected at three indicated points, whence they were not to move on pain of death, until duly escorted by troops to the ports of embarkation. The children under the age of four years were retained, of course without their parents, from whom they were forever separated. With admirable forethought, too, the priests took measures, as they supposed, that the arts of refining sugar, irrigating the rice-fields, constructing canals and aqueducts, besides many other useful branches of agricultural and mechanical business, should not die out with the intellectual, accomplished, and industrious race, alone competent to practise them, which was now sent forth to die. A very small number, not

[19] Lafuente, Hist. Gen. de España, xv. 295.
[20] Mem. de Richelieu, x. 231, cited by Lafuente, *ubi sup.*

more than six in each hundred, were accordingly reserved to instruct other inhabitants of Spain in those useful arts which they were now more than ever encouraged to despise.

Five hundred thousand full-grown human beings, as energetic, ingenious, accomplished, as any then existing in the world, were thus thrust forth into the deserts beyond sea, as if Spain had been overstocked with skilled labour, and as if its native production had already outgrown the world's power of consumption.

Had an equal number of mendicant monks, with the two archbishops who had contrived this deed at their head, been exported instead of the Moors, the future of Spain might have been a more fortunate one than it was likely to prove. The event was in itself perhaps of temporary advantage to the Dutch republic, as the poverty and general misery, aggravated by this disastrous policy, rendered the acknowledgment of the States' independence by Spain almost a matter of necessity.[21]

It is superfluous to enter into any farther disquisiton as to the various branches of the royal revenue. They remained essentially the same as during the preceding reign, and have been elaborately set forth in a previous chapter. The gradual drying up of resources in all the wide-spread and heterogeneous territories subject to the Spanish sceptre is the striking phenomenon of the present epoch. The distribution of such wealth as was still created followed the same laws which had long prevailed, while the decay and national paralysis, of which the prognostics could hardly be mistaken, were a natural result of the system.

The six archbishops had now grown to eleven,[22] and still received gigantic revenues ; the income of the Archbishop of Toledo, including the fund of one hundred thousand destined for repairing the cathedral, being estimated at three hundred thousand dollars a year, that of the Archbishop of

[21] Gir°. Soranzo, Relazione. The ambassador expressly states it as a fact. Compare especially Lafuente's admirable history of Spain, vol. xv. 294, 295, *seqq.*, 370-394.

[22] Ibid.

Seville and the others varying from one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to fifty thousand.[23] The sixty-three bishops perhaps averaged fifty thousand a year each,[24] and there were eight more in Italy.[25]

The commanderies of chivalry, two hundred at least in number, were likewise enormously profitable. Some of them were worth thirty thousand a year; the aggregate annual value being from one-and-a-half to two millions, and all in Lerma's gift, upon his own terms.[26]

Chivalry, that noblest of ideals, without which, in some shape or another, the world would be a desert and a sty; which included within itself many of the noblest virtues which can adorn mankind—generosity, self-denial, chastity, frugality, patience, protection to the feeble, the down-trodden, and the oppressed; the love of daring adventure, devotion to a pure religion and a lofty purpose, most admirably pathetic, even when in the eyes of the vulgar most fantastic—had been the proudest and most poetical of Spanish characteristics, never to be entirely uprooted from the national heart.

Alas! what was there in the commanderies of Calatrava, Alcantara, Santiago, and all the rest of those knightly orders, as then existing, to respond to the noble sentiments on which all were supposed to be founded? Institutions for making money, for pillaging the poor of their hard-earned pittance, trafficked in by greedy ministers and needy courtiers with a shamelessness which had long ceased to blush at vices however gross, at venality however mean.

Venality was in truth the prominent characteristic of the Spanish polity at this epoch. Everything political or ecclesiastical, from highest to lowest, was matter of merchandize.

It was the autocrat, governing king and kingdom, who disposed of episcopal mitres, cardinals' hats, commanders' crosses, the offices of regidores or municipal magistrates in

[23] S. Contarini, Relazione. Fran. Priuli. [24] Ibid. [25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid. Giro. Soranzo. "Essendo capaci li maritati e ogni altra condizione di persone non eccettuate le donne."

all the cities, farmings of revenues, collectorships of taxes, at prices fixed by himself.

It was never known that the pope refused to confirm the ecclesiastical nominations which were made by the Spanish court.

The nuncius had the privilege of dispensing the small cures from thirty dollars a year downwards,[27] of which the number was enormous. Many of these were capable, in careful hands, of becoming ten times as valuable as their nominal estimate,[28] and the business in them became in consequence very extensive and lucrative. They were often disposed of for the benefit of servants and the hangers-on of noble families, to laymen, to women, children, to babes unborn.

When such was the most thriving industry in the land, was it wonderful that the poor of high and low degree were anxious in ever-increasing swarms to effect their entrance into convent, monastery, and church, and that trade, agriculture, and manufactures languished?

The foreign polity of the court remained as it had been established by Philip II.

Its maxims were very simple. To do unto your neighbour all possible harm, and to foster the greatness of Spain by sowing discord and maintaining civil war in all other nations, was the fundamental precept. To bribe and corrupt the servants of other potentates, to maintain a regular paid body of adherents in foreign lands, ever ready to engage in schemes of assassination, conspiracy, sedition, and rebellion against the legitimate authority, to make mankind miserable, so far as it was in the power of human force or craft to produce wretchedness, were objects still faithfully pursued.[29]

[27] F. Soranzo. [28] Ibid.

[29] "In Francia medesimamente procurava col tener le provincie disunite, divise le forze, separati gli animi, diffidenti i pensieri, ribellati i principi, sollevati i popoli e tirando per questa via le cose al lungo di stancare e si fosse potuto di ridurre in niente le forze di quella corona . . . . la prima giova alla Spagna per conservarsi, procurando di tener lontane le sedizioni nei proprii regni e di nutrire le discordie negli altri potentati . . . e vedendo che questo imperio non è appoggiato alle richezze de' grandi chi pochissimi sono che non siano in qualche via consumati, non alle speranze dei popoli perchè questi con le molte gravezze sono oppresse, non alle armi poiche propria milizia che

They had not yet led to the entire destruction of other realms and their submission to the single sceptre of Spain, nor had they developed the resources, material or moral, of a mighty empire so thoroughly as might have been done perhaps by a less insidious policy, but they had never been abandoned.

It was a steady object of policy to keep such potentates of Italy as were not already under the dominion of the Spanish crown in a state of internecine feud with each other and of virtual dependence on the powerful kingdom. The same policy pursued in France, of fomenting civil war by subsidy, force, and chicane, during a long succession of years in order to reduce that magnificent realm under the sceptre of Philip, has been described in detail. The chronic rebellion of Ireland against the English crown had been assisted and inflamed in every possible mode, the system being considered as entirely justified by the aid and comfort afforded by the queen to the Dutch rebels.

It was a natural result of the system according to which kingdoms and provinces with the populations dwelling therein were transferable like real estate by means of marriage-settlements, entails, and testaments, that the proprietorship of most of the great realms in Christendom was matter of fierce legal dispute. Lawsuits, which in chancery could last for centuries before a settlement of the various claims was made, might have infinitely enriched the gentlemen of the long robe and reduced all the parties to beggary, had there been any tribunal but the battle-field to decide among the august litigants. Thus the King of Great Britain claimed the legal proprietorship and sovereignty of Brittany, Normandy, Anjou, Gascony, Calais, and Boulogne in France, besides the whole kingdom by right of conquest.[30] The French king claimed to be rightful

sia disciplinata non tiene la Spagna . . . . si può affirmare che resti il principale fondamento di questo imperio collocato negli travagli nella debolezza e divisione degli altri potentati," &c. &c.—F. Soranzo.

[30] Niccolo Molin, Ambasc. appresso Giacomo I. 1607, in Barozzi and Berchet, Ser. IV. vol. i. Pietro Priuli, Ambasc. in Francia, 1608. Ibid.

heir of Castile, Biscay, Guipuscoa, Arragon, Navarre, nearly all the Spanish peninsula in short, including the whole of Portugal and the Balearic islands to boot.[31] The King of Spain claimed, as we have seen often enough, not only Brittany but all France as his lawful inheritance. Such was the virtue of the prevalent doctrine of proprietorship. Every potentate was defrauded of his rights, and every potentate was a criminal usurper. As for the people, it would have excited a smile of superior wisdom on regal, legal, or sacerdotal lips, had it been suggested that by any possibility the governed could have a voice or a thought in regard to the rulers whom God in His grace had raised up to be their proprietors and masters.

The army of Spain was sunk far below the standard at which it had been kept when it seemed fit to conquer and govern the world. Neither by Spain nor Italy could those audacious, disciplined, and obedient legions be furnished,[32] at which the enemies of the mighty despot trembled from one extremity of earth to the other. Peculation, bankruptcy, and mutiny had done their work at last. We have recently had occasion to observe the conduct of the veterans in Flanders at critical epochs. At this moment, seventy thousand soldiers were on the muster and pay roll of the army serving in those provinces, while not thirty thousand men existed in the flesh.

The navy was sunk to fifteen or twenty old galleys, battered, dismantled, unseaworthy, and a few armed ships for convoying the East and West Indiamen to and from their destinations.[33]

The general poverty was so great that it was often absolutely impossible to purchase food for the royal household.[34] "If you ask me," said a cool observer, "how this great show of empire is maintained, when the funds are so small, I answer that it is done by not paying at all."[35] The Govern-

[31] P. Priuli, *ubi sup.*

[32] S. Contarini, Relazione. "Perchè la Spagna si trova spopolata."

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid. "Momenti nei quali le mense reali mancavano del necessario onde cibarsi."

[35] Ibid.

ment was shamelessly, hopelessly bankrupt. The noble band of courtiers were growing enormously rich. The state was a carcase which unclean vultures were picking to the bones.

The foremost man in the land—the autocrat, the absolute master in State and Church—was the Duke of Lerma.[36]

Very rarely in human history has an individual attained to such unlimited power under a monarchy, without actually placing the crown upon his own head. Mayors of the palace, in the days of the do-nothing kings, wielded nothing like the imperial control which was firmly held by this great favourite. Yet he was a man of very moderate capacity and limited acquirements, neither soldier, lawyer, nor priest.

The duke was past sixty years of age, a tall, stately, handsome man, of noble presence and urbane manner. Born of the patrician house of Sandoval, he possessed, on the accession of Philip, an inherited income of ten or twelve thousand dollars. He had now, including what he had bestowed on his son, a funded revenue of seven hundred thousand a year.[37] He had besides, in cash, jewels, and furniture, an estimated capital of six millions.[38] All this he had accumulated in ten years of service, as prime minister, chief equerry, and first valet of the chamber to the king.

The tenure of his authority was the ascendancy of a firm character over a very weak one. At this moment he was doubtless the most absolute ruler in Christendom, and Philip III. the most submissive and uncomplaining of his subjects.[39]

[36] Francesco Soranzo, Relazione di Spagna Ambasciatore dall' anno 1597–1602, in Barozzi and Berchet, Serie I. vol. i. pp. 1–214. Otto. Bon, Ambasciatore strao. a Filippo III. nel 1602, Relazione. Ibid. Ser I. vol. i., pp. 215–275. S. Contarini, Ambasc. a Filippo III. 1602–1604. Ibid. Ser. I. vol. i. pp. 277–337. F. Priuli. Ambasc. a Filippo III. 1604–1608. Ibid. Ser. I. vol. i. pp. 339–402. Giro. Soranzo, Ambasc. a Filippo III. 1608–1611. Ibid. Ser. I. vol. i. pp. 431–492.

[37] Giro. Soranzo. [38] Ibid.

[39] Ed in questo Duca si può dire che sia ridotta la somma di tutto il governo, la dispensa delle grazie e tutto il bene ed il male di chi pretende alcuna cosa a quelle corte, perchè e veramente senza esempio l'autorità e la grazia che egli possiede appresso il re; anzi che per ottenere quello che si pretende importa più l'aver favorevole il Duca di Lerma che quasi il re medesimo," &c., &c.—F. Soranzo.

"E che finalmente tutte le cose si riducono alla volontà ed all' autorità

The origin of his power was well known. During the reign of Philip II., the prince, treated with great severity by his father, was looked upon with contempt by every one about court. He was allowed to take no part in affairs, and, having heard of the awful tragedy of his eldest half-brother, enacted ten years before his own birth, he had no inclination to confront the wrath of that terrible parent and sovereign before whom all Spain trembled. Nothing could have been more humble, more effaced, more obscure, than his existence as prince.[40] The Marquis of Denia, his chamberlain, alone was kind to him, furnished him with small sums of money, and accompanied him on the shooting excursions in which his father occasionally permitted him to indulge.[41] But even these little attentions were looked upon with jealousy by the king; so that the marquis was sent into honourable exile from court as governor of Valencia.[42] It was hoped that absence would wean the prince of his affection for the kind chamberlain. The calculation was erroneous. No sooner were the eyes of Philip II. closed in death than the new king made haste to send for Denia, who was at once created Duke of Lerma, declared of the privy council, and appointed master

del duca e gli altri consiglieri attendono non meno al insinuarsi nelle grazie di S. E. che alli loro propri interessi in modo che si può dire che questo re sia assolutamente governato e che la maggiore parte delli ministri più principali, per non dire tutti, attendino fuori dell' ordinario al proprio bene."—Otto. Bon Relazione.

"Dal che nasce il potere che tiene sopra di lui il privato che lo governa. Sarà difficile d' ottenere la volontà di questo principe perchè il privato lo tiene in suo potere fino dai primi anni della sua gioventù. Il potere di lui si conserva intieramente nella persona del Duca di Lerma."—S. Contarini, Relazione.

"Questo re viene retto da un solo servitore. In questo regno il padrone non ha parte di niente."—F. Priuli.

"Il Duca di Lerma, erminentissimo ed assoluto signore di quel governo .... si ha impossessato della volontà di S. M. che ne è oggidi talmente signore che domina e regge il tutto ai suoi cenni. Assoluto maestro e dispensatore delle grazie regie, egli assegna tutti i vescovati e commende, egli fa i cardinali che sono nominati dal rè di Spagna ed è libero signore e padrone di tutta la corona reale." Gir°. Soranzo, Relazione.

"Essendo il Duca così accorto ed avendo così ben disposto a suo gusto il governo del palazzo e circondato il semplice re da suoi dependenti ch' oltre il non esser possibile che alcuno gli parli senza sua saputa quando anco gli fosse parlato da chi si voglia sa tutto quello che gli viene detto da che segue che non è persona per grande per importante che sia che avesse tant' animo di svegliare il rè che non temesse di pagare subito con la sua rovina la pena del suo ardire." Otto. Bon Relazione.

[40] F Sorenzo. [41] Ibid. [42] Ibid.

of the horse and first gentleman of the bed-chamber. From that moment the favourite became supreme. He was entirely without education, possessed little experience in affairs of state, and had led the life of a commonplace idler and voluptuary until past the age of fifty. Nevertheless he had a shrewd mother-wit, tact in dealing with men, aptitude to take advantage of events. He had directness of purpose, firmness of will, and always knew his own mind. From the beginning of his political career unto its end, he conscientiously and without swerving pursued a single aim. This was to rob the exchequer by every possible mode and at every instant of his life. Never was a more masterly financier in this respect. With a single eye to his own interests, he preserved a magnificent unity in all his actions. The result had been to make him in ten years the richest subject in the world, as well as the most absolute ruler.

He enriched his family, as a matter of course. His son was already made Duke of Uceda, possessed enormous wealth, and was supposed by those who had vision in the affairs of court to be the only individual ever likely to endanger the power of the father. Others thought that the young duke's natural dulness would make it impossible for him to supplant the omnipotent favourite.[43] The end was not yet, and time was to show which class of speculators was in the right. Meantime the whole family was united and happy. The sons and daughters had intermarried with the Infantados, and other most powerful and wealthy families of grandees.[44] The uncle, Sandoval, had been created by Lerma a cardinal and archbishop of Toledo ;[45] the king's own schoolmaster being removed from that dignity, and disgraced and banished from court for having spoken disrespectfully of the favourite.[46] The duke had reserved for himself twenty thousand a year from the revenues of the archbishopric,[47] as a moderate price for thus conducting himself as became a dutiful nephew. He had ejected Rodrigo de

[43] "Ma l'ottusità sua non lo renderà mai atto a un tanto carico."—F. Priuli.

[44] Otto. Bon. [45] F. Soranzo.
[46] S. Contarini. F. Soranzo.
[47] F. Priuli, Relazione.

Vasquez from his post as president of the council.[48] As a more conclusive proof of his unlimited sway than any other of his acts had been, he had actually unseated and banished the inquisitor-general, Don Pietro Porto Carrero,[49] and supplanted him in that dread office, before which even anointed sovereigns trembled, by one of his own creatures.

In the discharge of his various functions, the duke and all his family were domesticated in the royal palace, so that he was at no charges for housekeeping. His apartments there were more sumptuous than those of the king and queen.[50] He had removed from court the Dutchess of Candia,[51] sister of the great Constable of Castile, who had been for a time in attendance on the queen, and whose possible influence he chose to destroy in the bud. Her place as mistress of the robes was supplied by his sister, the Countess of Lemos ; while his wife, the terrible Duchess of Lerma, was constantly with the queen, who trembled at her frown. Thus the royal pair were completely beleaguered, surrounded, and isolated from all except the Lermas.[52] When the duke conferred with the king, the doors were always double locked.[53]

In his capacity as first valet[54] it was the duke's duty to bring the king's shirt in the morning, to see to his wardrobe and his bed, and to supply him with ideas for the day. The king depended upon him entirely and abjectly, was miserable when separated from him four-and-twenty hours, thought with the duke's thoughts and saw with the duke's eyes. He

[48] F. Soranzo.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ott°. Bon, Relazione. "Tanto suntuosi da abbagliare quelli del re stesso."—S. Contarini.

[51] F. Soranzo.

[52] Ibid. "Vi saria anco la regina che potria e sapria svegliarlo per la comodità ma è lei ancora *tenuta oppressa* dalla Duchessa e dal medesimo Duca suo marito che non *può nè parlare nè respirare* e poi conoscendo il re di tanta semplicità como è veramente e vedendolo esser così innamorato del Duca si crede che temi prima di non fare frutto e poi di esser scoperta da S. M. al medesimo Duca da che ne potesse seguire mala disposizione tra loro tanta è in particolare la Duchessa terribile e formidabile il favore del Duca. In tanto che il povero Re per esser di natura poco atto al governare è circondato, sta e starà sempre così dormendo se non è svegliato di qualche gran rovina che estraordinariamente lo punga e che insieme necessiti una buona mano de soggetti grandi a sollevarlo ed a liberare tutto il governo da così violenta oppressione," &c. &c.—Ott°. Bon, Relazione.

[53] S. Contarini, Relazione.

[54] "Somiglier del corpo. L'Uffizio del somiglier del corpo consiste nell' aver cura dei vestiti del re e del suo letto."—S. Contarini.

was permitted to know nothing of state affairs, save such portions as were communicated to him by Lerma. The people thought their monarch bewitched, so much did he tremble before the favourite, and so unscrupulously did the duke appropriate for his own benefit and that of his creatures everything that he could lay his hands upon. It would have needed little to bring about a revolution, such was the universal hatred felt for the minister, and the contempt openly expressed for the king.[55]

The duke never went to the council. All papers and documents relating to business were sent to his apartments. Such matters as he chose to pass upon, such decrees as he thought proper to issue, were then taken by him to the king, who signed them with perfect docility.[56] As time went on, this amount of business grew too onerous for the royal hand, or this amount of participation by the king in affairs of state came to be esteemed superfluous and inconvenient by the duke, and his own signature was accordingly declared to be equivalent to that of the sovereign's sign-manual. It is doubtful whether such a degradation of the royal prerogative had ever been heard of before in a Christian monarch.[57]

It may be imagined that this system of government was not of a nature to expedite business, however swiftly it might fill the duke's coffers. High officers of state, foreign ambas-

[55] "Il volgo si esprime dicendo che il rè fu stregato, altri che trema del su favorito . . . vi vorrebbe poco per far nascere una revoluzione . . . il duca di Lerma prende per se e per i suoi quello che più gli pare e piace, l'odio del popolo è tanto grande verso il duca per il mal uso del suo potere come verso il re a cagione della sua debolezza."—S. Contarini.

"Hat diese wenige Jahre für ihn und die Seinigen das gras wol geschnitten und so vil dasz ich mirs nicht trauwe zu schreiben, denn es mehr ein Gedicht als der Wahrheit gleich sieht und doch in *re ipsa* ist." —Khevenhüller, Ann. Ferd vi. 3041.

"Parlano del re in guisa che non oso riferirlo perche lo tengono in assai poca considerazione e perche fa tutto quello che vuole il duca di Lerma."—Ibid.

[56] Ottaviano Bon, Relazione. Gir°. Soranzo. S. Contarini, relazione. F. Priuli. "Rimettendoli quasi tutti al duca senza vederli."

[57] "La segnatura del duca di Lerma fu dal re parificata alla propria, esempio unico nella storia delle monarchie," says N. Barozzi, citing Relatione della vita del re Filippo III. e delli suoi favoriti.—MS. della Biblioteca reale di Berlino. (Barozzi and Berchet, s. i. vi. p. 288.) See also Lafuente, xv. 294, s. 99.

"Dasz er *absolutus Dominus* kann genannt werden." — Khevenhüller, Annal. Ferdin. vi. 3041.

sadors, all men in short charged with important affairs, were obliged to dance attendance for weeks and months on the one man whose hands grasped all the business of the kingdom, while many departed in despair without being able to secure a single audience. It was entirely a matter of trade. It was necessary to bribe in succession all the creatures of the duke before getting near enough to headquarters to bribe the duke himself.[58] Never were such itching palms. To do business at court required the purse of Fortunatus. There was no deception in the matter. Everything was frank and above board in that age of chivalry. Ambassadors wrote to their sovereigns that there was no hope of making treaties or of accomplishing any negotiation except by purchasing the favour of the autocrat;[59] and Lerma's price was always high. At one period the republic of Venice wished to put a stop to the depredations by Spanish pirates upon Venetian commerce, but the subject could not even be approached by the envoy until he had expended far more than could be afforded out of his meagre salary in buying an interview.[60]

[58] "E che per fargli capitar polizze o d' udienzia o di negozio bisogna durar fatica di settimane entiere ed andar a diverse mani con favori straordinarii e per aver la risposta poi bisogna alle volte star a quella discrezione che mai viene," &c. &c.—Ott°. Bon, Relazione.

"In modo che per la suprema autorità che lui tiene appresso S. M. (la qual non vede ni ricerca nè fa mai di più di quello che le vien detto e portato da esso duca) in suo potere sta l' espedire quello che comporta il suo interesse."—Ibid.

"Ogni principe o cavaliere avendo qualsivoglia interesse colla corona concorre con richissimi presenti e doni .... e non vi è ministro o rappresentate regio che non profondi per mantenere lo ben affetto e per goder l'autorità della sua intercessione."—G. Soranzo.

"Ottiene dal re ciò che vuole; ha avuto finora beni, commende, entrate donativi per la casa e per la persona sua pel valore di più di due milioni d'oro e ne averà quanti vorrà, e quante ne porterà l'occasione; perciocchè oltre quelle mercedi che le sono fatte dal re che sono grandissime, la libertà ch' ha di accettar presenti lo farà opulentissimo, perchè non è chi pretenda in corte cosa di momento che passando necessiaramente per mano del duca non lo presenta largamente, come si fa anco con gran parte di questi ministri novelli, che tutti però si vanno facendo richissimi."—F. Soranzo.

[59] F. Soranzo. Ott°. Bon, Relaz.

[60] Ott°. Bon, Relazione. The small amount of salary paid by the Venetian republic to its envoys, who had the rank of ambassador at all the principal courts, and were expected to live in as splendid style as did the better paid ministers of other powers, was a perpetual subject of complaint. Some of the royal ambassadors had five hundred dollars a month, a few had a thousand dollars a month, while the diplomatic agent (who was not ambassador) of the Grand Duke of Florence in France had a larger salary than that of the Venetian ambassador at the same court. "We are equal to royal ambassadors in dignity," said

When it is remembered that with this foremost power in the world affairs of greater or less importance were perpetually to be transacted by the representatives of other nations as well as by native subjects of every degree; that all these affairs were to pass through the hands of Lerma, and that those hands had ever to be filled with coin, the stupendous opulence of the one man can be easily understood. Whether the foremost power of the world, thus governed, were likely to continue the foremost power, could hardly seem doubtful to those accustomed to use their reason in judging of the things of this world.[61]

Meantime the duke continued to transact business; to sell his interviews and his interest; to traffic in cardinals' hats, bishops' mitres, judges' ermine, civic and magisterial votes in all offices, high or humble, of church, army, or state.

He possessed the art of remembering, or appearing to remember, the matters of business which had been communicated to him. When a negotiator, of whatever degree, had the good fortune to reach the presence, he found the duke to all appearance mindful of the particular affair which led to

Badoer; "we are obliged to approximate to them in expense; one of three things must therefore happen: our salary must be increased over the sum fixed sixty years ago, which averages only one hundred and seventy miserable dollars a month, or the richest citizens of the republic must always be selected to fill all the embassies, or persons must be made use of for the posts who will prejudice the esteem and service of this most serene republic. The esteem, because they must suffer the thousand indignities which are caused by contempt; the service, because they will not be able to make their way towards matters of business and information which now-a-days can only be done all over the world with money."—A. Badoer, Relazione di Francia in Barozzi and Berchet, Serie II. vol. i. p. 168.

[61] "Questi sono tutti quelli che governano questa gran macchina, la maggiore parte de quali si lascia vincere e dominare dall' avarizia e per ciò sono applicati a ricever volontieri presenti e come presidenti dei consigli liberamente vendono la maggior parte delle vacanze e le volontà loro istesse e con l'esempio di questi, gl' inferiori che sono ad essi subordinati s' accomodano all' istesso e in questo tutto sono talmente domesticati ed accordati che sapendolo il rè e non lo proibendo anzi approvandolo con il dare licenza a quello che glielo domandano di poter ricever da qualche soggetto cospicuo gran somma nelli negozii non si cammina d' altra maniera nè par altra via s' ottiene oggidì giustizia e favori a quella corte e non mancano li mezzi a quest' affetto ordinati e conosciuti da tutti."—Ott°. Bon, Relazione. Compare S. Contarini, Relazione. "Non e difficile regalare il duca di Lerma. Egli fa, sciogle ed ordina tutto quello che vuole," &c. "They toss causes from one to another like tennis balls," wrote Cornwallis from Madrid. "A man may lawfully say here, *non est qui facit bonum, non usque ad unum.* God Almighty deliver me from amongst them."—Winwood, II. 312.

the interview, and fully absorbed by its importance.[62] There were men who, trusting to the affability shown by the great favourite, and to the handsome price paid down in cash for that urbanity, had been known to go away from their interview believing that their business was likely to be accomplished, until the lapse of time revealed to them the wildness of their dream.

The duke perhaps never manifested his omnipotence on a more striking scale than when by his own fiat he removed the court and the seat of government to Valladolid, and kept it there six years long.[63] This was declared by disinterested observers to be not only contrary to common sense, but even beyond the bounds of possibility.[64] At Madrid the king had splendid palaces, and in its neighbourhood beautiful country residences, a pure atmosphere, and the facility of changing the air at will. At Valladolid there were no conveniences of any kind, no sufficient palace, no summer villa, no park, nothing but an unwholesome climate.[65] But most of the duke's estates were in that vicinity, and it was desirable for him to overlook them in person.[66] Moreover, he wished to get rid of the possible influence over the king of the Empress Dowager Maria, widow of Maximilian II. and aunt and grandmother of Philip III.[67] The minister could hardly drive this exalted personage from court, so easily as he had banished the ex-Archbishop of Toledo, the Inquisitor-General, the Duchess of Candia, besides a multitude of lesser note. So he did the next best thing, and banished the court from the empress, who was not likely to put up with the

[62] F. Soranzo.

[63] F. Soranzo. F. Priuli. "Essendo asceso tanto il credito appresso S.M. che teme di contradirgli e perciò guidato da' suoi interessi si lasciò persuadere a condurre la corte in Valladolid tenendove la vicino a sei anni contra il senso commune e quasi contro al possibile per l' incapacità del luogo."

[64] F. Priuli. [65] F. Soranzo.

[66] Ibid. "I fear some evil event to that duke," wrote Cornwallis, "whose immoderate desires of his own particular interests draw him to precipitate himself into the gulf of envy and malediction of the people, by leading a king in such an unfitting sort after him, with manifest neglect of the important affairs of his kingdom, and disregard of what belongs to his kingly office. The wisest say here, according to our English proverb, that hell is broken loose." Winwood, II. 395.

[67] Ibid. She was sister of Philip II. Her daughter Anna was Philip II.'s fourth wife, and mother of Philip III.

inconveniences of Valladolid for the sake of outrivalling the duke. This Babylonian captivity lasted until Madrid was nearly ruined, until the desolation of the capital, the moans of the tradespeople, the curses of the poor, and the grumblings of the courtiers, finally produced an effect even upon the arbitrary Lerma.[68] He then accordingly re-emigrated, with king and Government, to Madrid, and caused it to be published that he had at last overcome the sovereign's repugnance to the old capital, and had persuaded him to abandon Valladolid.[69]

There was but one man who might perhaps from his position have competed with the influence of Lerma. This was the king's father-confessor, whom Philip wished—although of course his wish was not gratified—to make a member of the council of state.[70] The monarch, while submitting in everything secular to the duke's decrees, had a feeble determination to consult and to be guided by his confessor in all matters of conscience. As it was easy to suggest that high affairs of state, the duties of government, the interests of a great people, were matters not entirely foreign to the conscience of anointed kings, an opening to power might have seemed easy to an astute and ambitious churchman. But the Dominican who kept Philip's conscience, Gasparo de Cordova by name,[71] was, fortunately for the favourite, of a very tender paste, easily moulded to the duke's purpose. Dull and ignorant enough, he was not so stupid as to doubt that, should he whisper any suggestions or criticisms in regard to the minister's proceedings, the king would betray him and he would lose his office.[72] The cautious friar accordingly held his peace and his place, and there was none to dispute the sway of the autocrat.

What need to dilate further upon such a minister and upon

[68] Priuli. F. Soranzo.
[69] Ibid. [70] F. Soranzo. [71] Ibid.
[72] "Ed il confessore, che è quello che parlando al re di secreto potria avvertirlo, è di pasta così tenera, di così poco intendimento, del tutto ignaro del governo di stato ed incapace di tutte le cose grandi che non sapria farlo e forse per il timore che il re stesso non lo palesasse a S. E. dal che non seguisse la sua total depressione." —Ottº. Bon, Relazione.

such a system of government? To bribe and to be bribed, to maintain stipendiaries in every foreign Government, to place the greatness of the empire upon the weakness, distraction, and misery of other nations, to stimulate civil war, revolts of nobles and citizens against authority; separation of provinces, religious discontents in every land of Christendom—such were the simple rules ever faithfully enforced.

The other members of what was called the council were insignificant.

Philip III., on arriving at the throne, had been heard to observe that the day of simple esquires and persons of low condition was past, and that the turn of great nobles had come.[73] It had been his father's policy to hold the grandees in subjection, and to govern by means of ministers who were little more than clerks, generally of humble origin; keeping the reins in his own hands. Such great personages as he did employ, like Alva, Don John of Austria, and Farnese, were sure at last to excite his jealousy and to incur his hatred. Forty-three years of this kind of work had brought Spain to the condition in which the third Philip found it. The new king thought to have found a remedy in discarding the clerks, and calling in the aid of dukes. Philip II. was at least a king. The very first act of Philip III. at his father's death was to abdicate.

It was, however, found necessary to retain some members of the former Government. Fuentes, the best soldier and accounted the most dangerous man in the empire, was indeed kept in retirement as governor of Milan, while Cristoval di Mora, who had enjoyed much of the late king's confidence, was removed to Portugal as viceroy. But Don John of Idiaquez, who had really been the most efficient of the old administration, still remained in the council. Without the subordinate aid of his experience in the routine of business, it would have been difficult for the favourite to manage the great machine with his single hand. But there was no disposition on the part of the ancient minister to oppose the new order of things.

[73] F. Soranzo, Relazione. "Scudieri, certa bassa taglia d'uomini."

A cautious, caustic, dry old functionary, talking more with his shoulders than with his tongue,[74] determined never to commit himself, or to risk shipwreck by venturing again into deeper waters than those of the harbour in which he now hoped for repose, Idiaquez knew that his day of action was past. Content to be confidential clerk to the despot duke, as he had been faithful secretary to the despot king, he was the despair of courtiers and envoys who came to pump, after having endeavoured to fill an inexhaustible cistern. Thus he proved, on the whole, a useful and comfortable man, not to the country, but to its autocrat.

Of the Count of Chinchon, who at one time was supposed to have court influence because a dabbler in architecture, much consulted during the building of the Escorial by Philip II. until the auditing of his accounts brought him into temporary disgrace,[75] and the Marquises of Velada, Villalonga, and other ministers, it is not necessary to speak. There was one man in the council, however, who was of great importance, wielding a mighty authority in subordination to the duke. This was Don Pietro de Franqueza.[76] An emancipated slave, as his name indicated, and subsequently the body-servant of Lerma, he had been created by that minister secretary of the privy council. He possessed some of the virtues of the slave, such as docility and attachment to the hand that had fed and scourged him, and many vices of both slave and freedman. He did much of the work which it would have been difficult for the duke to accomplish in person, received his fees, sold and dispensed his interviews, distributed his bribes. In so doing, as might be supposed, he did not neglect his own interest. It was a matter of notoriety, no man knowing it better than the king, that no business, foreign or domestic, could be conducted or even begun at court without large preliminary fees to the secretary of the council,

[74] "In modo che è conosciuto da tutti per testa secca e che poco possa ad altri che al rè solo giovare . . . . l'ho provato tanto cauto avido e riservato che alle volte più mi rispondeva con le spalle che con la bocca."—Ott°. Bon, Relazione.

[75] F. Soranzo, Relazione.

[76] Ott°. Bon, Relazione.

his wife, and his children. He had, in consequence, already accumulated an enormous fortune. His annual income, when it was stated, excited amazement. He was insolent and overbearing to all comers until his dues had been paid, when he became at once obliging, supple, and comparatively efficient. Through him alone lay the path to the duke's sanctuary.[77]

The nominal sovereign, Philip III., was thirty years of age. A very little man, with pink cheeks, flaxen hair, and yellow beard, with a melancholy expression of eye, and protruding under lip and jaw, he was now comparatively alert and vigorous in constitution, although for the first seven years of his life it had been doubtful whether he would live from week to week.[78] He had been afflicted during that period with a chronic itch or leprosy, which had undermined his strength, but which had almost entirely disappeared as he advanced in life.[79]

He was below mediocrity in mind,[80] and had received scarcely any education. He had been taught to utter a few phrases, more or less intelligible, in French, Italian, and Flemish, but was quite incapable of sustaining a conversation in either of those languages.[81] When a child, he had learned and subsequently forgotten the rudiments of the Latin grammar.[82]

These acquirements, together with the catechism and the offices of the Church, made up his whole stock of erudition. That he was devout as a monk of the middle ages, conforming daily and hourly to religious ceremonies, need scarcely be stated. It was not probable that the son of Philip II. would be a delinquent to church observances. He was not deficient in courage, rode well, was fond of hunting, kept

[77] Ott°. Bon, Relazione. "Di bassissima condizione, nato d' uno schiavo fatto libero che ha conservato e portato il nome di franqueza," &c. &c.

[78] "È il rè di buona complessione, agile della vita, piccolo della persona ma ben formato, di pelo rosso e biondo, di carnagione bianca e colorita, col labbro del mento sollevato all' Austriaca. Ha la guardatura un poco malinconica," &c. &c.—F. Soranzo.

[79] Ibid.

[80] S. Contarini. "La sua intelligenza meno che mediocre." — F. Priuli.

[81] S. Contarini. "Parla alcune lingue ma corrottemente solo che basti per farsi intendere . . . . ed ha avuto qualche principio di lingua Latina quondo era giovinissimo."

[82] Ibid.

close to the staghounds, and confronted, spear in hand, the wild-boar with coolness and success.[83] He was fond of tennis, but his especial passion and chief accomplishment was dancing. He liked to be praised for his proficiency in this art, and was never happier than when gravely leading out the queen or his daughter, then four or five years of age—for he never danced with any one else—to perform a stately bolero.[84]

He never drank wine, but, on the other hand, was an enormous eater; so that, like his father in youth, he was perpetually suffering from stomach-ache as the effect of his gluttony.[85] He was devotedly attached to his queen, and had never known, nor hardly looked at, any other woman.[86] He had no vice but gambling, in which he indulged to a great extent, very often sitting up all night at cards.[87] This passion of the king's was much encouraged by Lerma, for obvious reasons. Philip had been known to lose thirty thousand dollars at a sitting, and always to some one of the family or dependents of the duke, who of course divided with them the spoils. At one time the Count of Pelbes, nephew of Lerma, had won two hundred thousand dollars in a very few nights from his sovereign.[88]

[83] "Corre dietro ai cani velocissamente, affronta i porchi cinghiali con grande ardire, tira d' archibugio in eccelenza bene," &c.—F. Soranzo.

[84] "Non beve vino e mangia assai, si diletta della caccia e perciò esce spesso in campagna e fa volentieri viaggi impiegando il resto del tempo in giuocare alla pillotta ed in danzare; è soggetto di debole ingegno, nimicissimo del negozio e di governare non pensando nè a guerra nè a pace come sè non fosse rè nè avesse stati, non inclinando al governo nè per natura nè per educazione anzi per propria volontà si è allontanato del tutto; è per sua natura liberale sebbene alli negozii di grazia e di giustizia ancora non fa nè più nè meno di quello che vuole il D. di Lerma è in continuo bisogno di denaro, ha qualche notizia degli travagli che gli occorrono di Fiandra, d' Inghilterra e d' altri luoghi ma come quello che non ha gusto nè si può dire parte nel governo . . . . ma non vedendo nè considerando l' espedizioni e credo io non essendo capace di cose grandi con il sotto scrivere pare che dalla S. M. esca il tutto ma realmente sebbene vi sono li consigli il Duca fa e risolve tutte le cose a suo beneplacito." — Ottaviano Bon, Relazione.

"Balla molto bene ed è la cosa che gusta di più piacendogli d' esser lodato in queste divertimento . . . . quando balla ballasempre con sua figlia o con la regina," &c.—S. Contarini, Relazione.

[85] S. Contarini. "Sottoposto al dolor di stomaco per il soverchio mangiare. Nondimeno mangia carne del continuo e con essa si nutrisce quattro volte il giorno."—F. Priuli, Relazione.

[86] Ottavo. Bon. F. Soranzo.

[87] S. Contarini. F. Priuli.

[88] S. Contarini, Relazione. "Si intratiene la sera dopo la cena nel giuoco con il quale ha arrichito molti cavalieri che lo servono."—Girolamo Soranzo.

For the rest, Philip had few peculiarities or foibles. He was not revengeful, nor arrogant, nor malignant. He was kind and affectionate to his wife and children, and did his best to be obedient to the Duke of Lerma. Occasionally he liked to grant audiences, but there were few to request them. It was ridiculous and pathetic at the same time to see the poor king, as was very frequently the case, standing at a solemn green table till his little legs were tired, waiting to transact business with applicants who never came ; while ushers, chamberlains, and valets were rushing up and down the corridors, bawling for all persons so disposed to come and have an audience of their monarch. Meantime, the doors of the great duke's apartments in the same palace would be beleaguered by an army of courtiers, envoys, and contractors, who had paid solid gold for admission, and who were often sent away grumbling and despairing without entering the sacred precincts.[89]

As time wore on, the king, too much rebuked for attempting to meddle in state affairs, became solitary and almost morose, moping about in the woods by himself,[90] losing satisfaction in his little dancing and ball-playing diversions, but never forgetting his affection for the queen nor the hours for his four daily substantial repasts of meats and pastry. It would be unnecessary and almost cruel to dwell so long upon a picture of what was after all not much better than human imbecility, were it not that humanity is a more sacred thing than royalty. A satire upon such an embodiment of kingship is impossible, the simple and truthful characteristics being more effective than fiction or exaggeration. It would be

[89] " Ed è cosa ridicula il vedere che quando il rè vuole dar udienza il che segue più giorni alla settimana non si ritrova alcuno che la voglia e per non lasciarlo con questa indignità, li valletti di camera salgono sino nelli corridori del palazzo gridando ed invitando le persone a entrare all' udienza di sua Maestà ; neppure poi questo giova in modo che ben spesso le occorre levarsi dalla tavola dove appoggiato suole stare aspettando senza che alcuno o pochi le abbino parlato, ed all' incontro alle stanze del duca di Lerma è tanta frequenza d'ogni sorte di persone che vorrebbero udienza che è cosa non meno di stupore che di compassione il vederlo."—Ottaviano Bon, Relazioni.

[90] " E dopo di aversi entieramente dato al duca di Lerma il suo carattere è divenuto solitario ed amante di vagar nei boschi tanto che si dice che questi boschi ed il duca di Lerma siano il re."—S. Contarini.

unjust to exhume a private character after the lapse of two centuries merely to excite derision, but if history be not powerless to instruct, it certainly cannot be unprofitable to ponder the merits of a system which, after bestowing upon the world forty-three years of Philip the tyrant, had now followed them up with a decade of Philip the simpleton.

In one respect the reigning sovereign was in advance of his age. In his devotion to the Madonna he claimed the same miraculous origin for her mother as for herself. When the prayer *"O Sancta Maria sine labe originali concepta"* was chanted, he would exclaim with emotion that the words embodied his devoutest aspirations. He had frequent interviews with doctors of divinity on the subject, and instructed many bishops to urge upon the pope the necessity of proclaiming the virginity of the Virgin's mother. Could he secure this darling object of his ambition, he professed himself ready to make a pilgrimage on foot to Rome.[91] The pilgrimage was never made, for it may well be imagined that Lerma would forbid any such adventurous scheme. Meantime, the duke continued to govern the empire and to fill his coffers, and the king to shoot rabbits.

The queen was a few years younger than her husband, and far from beautiful. Indeed, the lower portion of her face was almost deformed. She was graceful, however, in her movements, and pleasing and gentle in manner.[92] She adored the king, looking up to him with reverence as the greatest and wisest of beings. To please him she had upon her marriage given up drinking wine, which, for a German, was considered a great sacrifice.[93] She recompensed herself, as the king did, by eating to an extent which, according to contemporary accounts, excited amazement.[94] Thus there was perfect

[91] S. Contarini, Relazione. Gir°. Soranzo. Notes of N. Barozzi (p. 289 ser. I. vol. i.) Poreno, Dichos y Hechos de Felipe III. ch. xii., cited by Barozzi.

[92] "Non si può dire brutta ma non è manco bella per avere la faccia deformata assai dalla bocca a basso, tuttavia la vaghezza del colore e l' agilità del corpo la fa riuscire grata ad ognuno e dal marito è grandemente amata."—F. Priuli, Relazione.

[93] F. Soranzo. Ott°. Bon, Relazione.

[94] "Le hanno levato il vino per rispetto della conversazione col rè che gli riesce molesto ma si rifà col mangiare tanto che è cosa di maraviglia." —Ott°. Bon, Relazione.

sympathy between the two in the important article of diet. She had also learned to play at cards, in order to take a hand with him at any moment, feebly hoping that an occasional game for love might rescue the king from that frantic passion by which his health was shattered and so many courtiers were enriched.[95]

Not being deficient in perception, the queen was quite aware of the greediness of all who surrounded the palace. She had spirit enough too to feel the galling tyranny to which the king was subjected. That the people hated the omnipotent favourite, and believed the king to be under the influence of sorcery, she was well aware. She had even a dim notion that the administration of the empire was not the wisest nor the noblest that could be devised for the first power in Christendom. But considerations of high politics scarcely troubled her mind. Of a People she had perhaps never heard, but she felt that the king was oppressed. She knew that he was helpless, and that she was herself his only friend. But of what avail were her timid little flutterings of indignation and resistance? So pure and fragile a creature could accomplish little good for king or people. Perpetually guarded and surrounded by the Countess of Lemos and the Duchess of Lerma, she lived in mortal awe of both.[96] As to the duke himself, she trembled at his very name. On her first attempts to speak with Philip on political matters—to hint at the unscrupulous character of his government, to arouse him to the necessity of striking for a little more liberty and for at least a trifling influence in the state—the poor little king instantly betrayed her to the favourite and she was severely punished. The duke took the monarch off at once on a long journey, leaving her alone for weeks long with the terrible duchess and countess. Never before had she been separated for a day from her husband, it having been the king's uniform custom to take her with him in all his expeditions. Her

[95] "Ne mostra di gustare d' altro trattenimento che del giuoco per conformarsi col re pretendendo per tal via di deviarlo dal giuocar con altri che lo fa cadere nelle sopradette perdite." —F. Priuli.

[96] F. Priuli. F. Soranzo.

ambition to interfere was thus effectually cured.[97] The duke forbade her thenceforth ever to speak of politics to her husband in public or in private—not even in bed—and the king was closely questioned whether these orders had been obeyed.[98] She submitted without a struggle. She saw how completely her happiness was at Lerma's mercy. She had no one to consult with, having none but Spanish people about her, except her German father-confessor, whom, as a great favour, and after a severe struggle, she had been allowed to retain, as otherwise her ignorance of the national language would have made it impossible for her to confess her little sins.[99] Moreover her brothers, the archdukes at Gratz, were in receipt of considerable annual stipends from the Spanish exchequer, and the duke threatened to stop those pensions at once should the queen prove refractory.[100] It is painful to dwell any longer on the abject servitude in which the king and queen were kept.[101] The two were at least

[97] "Voleva alcuni anni sono estendersi nel maneggio dei negozii ma il duca di Lerma che lo sentiva malissimo per levarla da questi pensieri la mortificò conducendo alcune volto il re in campagna senza di lei e tenendo glielo separato le settimane entiere. Sentì tanto la regina quest' assenza regia e conobbe l'origine di questo disgusto che da se si astenne affatto d' ingerirsi più nei negozii ed in questa maniera si pacificò col duca."—Gir°. Soranzo.

[98] F. Contarini "Nemmeno trovandosi a letto."—N. Barozzi (Ser. I. vol. i. p. 325) citing Relazione della Vita, &c. &c. MS. of Berlin.

"Ihr seyen alle Händt gebunden. Wasz man ihr zuwider thun kan, das thue man, wann sie was heimlich redt so hält man sie in Argwohn, es sey wider die Hertzogen Lerma und Uzeda oder die ihrigen angesehen. *Ihren Gemahl examinierten sie was sie mit ihm im Bedt redt und haben ihr verboten bey dem König um kein Sachen zu intercediren noch im Bedt oder allein mit ihm Negocio* zu tractiren. Was sie nach Deutschland schreibt will man wissen," etc. etc.—Khevenhüller, Annales Ferdinandei, tom. vi. 3038. Surely never was a more dismal picture painted of tyranny exercised by subject over his sovereigns. It was no wonder that the unfortunate queen protested to Count Khevenhüller that she 'would rather go into a convent at Gratz than be Queen of Spain."—Ibid.

[99] Ott°. Bon, Relazione. "Confessore della medesima nazione da lei tenuto a viva forza.—F. Priuli. Relazione.

[100] Gir°. Soranzo, Relazione. Five thousand crowns a month to the Archduke Ferdinand, and much help besides to the others. "L' arciduca Ferdinando al quale ha assegnato 5000 scudi di provisione al mese, e lui ed i fratelli cavano del continuo grossi ajuti di corte, e la regina non cessa mai di procurar loro alcuna cosa; e questa è una delle cause principali che tiene la regina in necessità di stare unita e si può dire dependente dal duca di Lerma; poichè procurando lei sempre alcun sussidio per i fratelli e convenendo valersi dell' autorità del duca, non può per questo importante rispetto dargli alcun disgusto nè intromettersi in quello che non è di sua soldisfazione."

[101] "Nel resto vive in continua servitù e con tanto rispetto che maggiore non si può dire."—Ott°. Bon, Relazione.

happy in each other's society, and were blessed with mutual affection, with pretty and engaging children, and with a similarity of tastes. It is impossible to imagine anything more stately, more devout, more regular, more innocent, more utterly dismal and insipid, than the lives of this wedded pair.

This interior view of the court and council of Spain will suffice to explain why, despite the languor and hesitations with which the transactions were managed, the inevitable tendency was towards a peace. The inevitable slowness, secrecy, and tergiversations were due to the dignity of the Spanish court, and in harmony with its most sacred traditions. But what profit could the Duke of Lerma expect by the continuance of the Dutch war, and who in Spain was to be consulted except the Duke of Lerma ?

CHAPTER XLIX.

Peace deliberations in Spain — Unpopularity of the project — Disaffection of the courtiers — Complaints against Spinola — Conference of the Catholic party — Position of Henry IV towards the republic — State of France — Further peace negotiations — Desire of King James of England for the restoration of the States to Spain — Arrival of the French commissioners — President Jeannin before the States-General — Dangers of a truce with Spain — Dutch legation to England — Arrival of Lewis Verreyken at the Hague with Philip's ratification — Rejection of the Spanish treaty — Withdrawal of the Dutch fleet from the Peninsula — The peace project denounced by the party of Prince Maurice — Opposition of Maurice to the plans of Barneveld — Amended ratification presented to the States-General — Discussion of the conditions — Determination to conclude a peace — Indian trade — Exploits of Admiral Matelieff in the Malay peninsula — He lays siege to Malacca — Victory over the Spanish fleet — Endeavour to open a trade with China — Return of Matelieff to Holland.

THE Marquis Spinola had informed the Spanish Government that if 300,000 dollars a month could be furnished, the war might be continued, but that otherwise it would be better to treat upon the basis of *uti possidetis*, and according to the terms proposed by the States-General. He had further intimated his opinion that, instead of waiting for the king's consent, it more comported with the king's dignity for the archdukes to enter into negotiations, to make a preliminary and brief armistice with the enemy, and then to solicit the royal approval of what had been done.

In reply, the king—that is to say the man who thought, wrote, and signed in behalf of the king—had plaintively observed that among evils the vulgar rule was to submit to the least.[1] Although, therefore, to grant to the Netherland rebels not only peace and liberty, but to concede to them whatever they had obtained by violence and the most abominable outrages, was the worst possible example to all princes ;

[1] The King to Spinola, 28 February, 1607, in Gallucci, 328.

yet as the enormous sum necessary for carrying on the war was not to be had, even by attempting to scrape it together from every corner of the earth, he agreed with the opinion of the archdukes that it was better to put an end to this eternal and exhausting war by peace or truce, even under severe conditions. That the business had thus far proceeded without consulting him, was publicly known, and he expressed approval of the present movements towards a peace or a long truce, assuring Spinola that such a result would be as grateful to him as if the war had been brought to a successful issue.

When the Marquis sent formal notice of the armistice to Spain there were many complaints at court. Men said that the measure was beneath the king's dignity, and contrary to his interests. It was a cessation of arms under iniquitous conditions, accorded to a people formerly subject and now rebellious. Such a truce was more fatal than any conflict, than any amount of slaughter. During this long and dreadful war, the king had suffered no disaster so terrible as this, and the courtiers now declared openly that the archduke was the cause of the royal and national humiliation. Having no children, nor hope of any, he desired only to live in tranquillity and selfish indulgence, like the indolent priest that he was, not caring what detriment or dishonour might accrue to the crown after his life was over.

Thus murmured the parasites and the plunderers within the dominions of the do-nothing Philip, denouncing the first serious effort to put an end to a war which the laws of nature had proved to be hopeless on the part of Spain.

Spinola too, who had spent millions of his own money, who had plunged himself into debt and discredit, while attempting to sustain the financial reputation of the king, who had by his brilliant services in the field revived the ancient glory of the Spanish arms, and who now saw himself exposed with empty coffers to a vast mutiny, which was likely to make his future movements as paralytic as those of his immediate predecessors—Spinola, already hated because he was an Italian, because he was of a mercantile family, and because he had

been successful, was now as much the object of contumely with the courtiers as with the archduke himself.

The splendid victory of Heemskerk had struck the government with dismay and diffused a panic along the coast. The mercantile fleets, destined for either India, dared not venture forth so long as the terrible Dutch cruisers, which had just annihilated a splendid Spanish fleet, commanded by a veteran of Lepanto, and under the very guns of Gibraltar, were supposed to be hovering off the Peninsula.[2] Very naturally, therefore, there was discontent in Spain that the cessation of hostilities had not originally been arranged for sea as well as land, and men said openly at court that Spinola ought to have his head cut off for agreeing to such an armistice.[3] Quite as reasonably, however, it was now felt to be necessary to effect as soon as possible the recal of this very inconvenient Dutch fleet from the coast of Spain.

The complaints were so incessant against Spinola that it was determined to send Don Diego d'Ybarra to Brussels, charged with a general superintendence of the royal interests in the present confused condition of affairs. He was especially instructed to convey to Spinola the most vehement reproaches in regard to the terms of the armistice, and to insist upon the cessation of naval hostilities, and the withdrawal of the cruisers.

Spinola, on his part, was exceedingly irritated that the arrangements which he had so carefully made with the archduke at Brussels should be so contumaciously assailed, and even disavowed, at Madrid. He was especially irritated that Ybarra should now be sent as his censor and overseer, and that Fuentes should have received orders to levy seven thousand troops in the Milanese for Flanders, the arrival of which reinforcements would excite suspicion, and probably break off negotiations.[4]

He accordingly sent his private secretary Biraga, posthaste to Spain with two letters. In number one he implored

[2] Letter of Henry IV., 13 June, 1607, in Jeannin, i. 146.
[3] Letters of F. Aerssens, in Van der Kemp, iii. 123. [4] Gallucci, 329.

his Majesty that Ybarra might not be sent to Brussels. If this request were granted, number two was to be burned. Otherwise, number two was to be delivered, and it contained a request to be relieved from all further employment in the king's service. The marquis was already feeling the same effects of success as had been experienced by Alexander Farnese, Don John of Austria, and other strenuous maintainers of the royal authority in Flanders. He was railed against, suspected, spied upon, put under guardianship, according to the good old traditions of the Spanish court. Public disgrace or secret poison might well be expected by him, as the natural guerdons of his eminent deeds.

Biraga also took with him the draught of the form in which the king's consent to the armistice and pending negotiations was desired, and he was particularly directed to urge that not one letter or comma should be altered, in order that no pretext might be afforded to the suspicious Netherlanders for a rupture.

In private letters to his own superintendent Strata, to Don John of Idiaquez, to the Duke of Lerma, and to Stephen Ybarra, Spinola enlarged upon the indignity about to be offered him, remonstrated vehemently against the wrong and stupidity of the proposed policy, and expressed his reliance upon the efforts of these friends of his to prevent its consummation. He intimated to Idiaquez that a new deliberation would be necessary to effect the withdrawal of the Dutch fleet—a condition not inserted in the original armistice—but that within the three months allowed for the royal ratification there would be time enough to procure the consent of the States to that measure.[5] If the king really desired to continue the war, he had but to alter a single comma in the draught, and, out of that comma, the stadholder's party would be certain to manufacture for him as long a war as he could possibly wish.[6]

In a subsequent letter to the king, Spinola observed that he was well aware of the indignation created in Spain by the

[5] Gallucci, 329, 331. [6] Ibid.

cessation of land hostilities without the recal of the fleet, but that nevertheless John Neyen had confidentially represented to the archdukes the royal assent as almost certain. As to the mission of Ybarra, the marquis reminded his master that the responsibility and general superintendence of the negotiations had been almost forced upon him. Certainly he had not solicited them. If another agent were now interposed, it was an advertisement to the world that the business had been badly managed. If the king wished a rupture, he had but to lift his finger or his pen; but to appoint another commissioner was an unfit reward for his faithful service. He was in the king's hands. If his reputation were now to be destroyed, it was all over with him and his affairs. The man, whom mortals had once believed incapable, would be esteemed incapable until the end of his days.

It was too late to prevent the mission of Ybarra, who, immediately after his arrival in Brussels, began to urge in the king's name that the words in which the provinces had been declared free by the archdukes might be expunged. What could be more childish than such diplomacy? What greater proof could be given of the incapacity of the Spanish court to learn the lesson which forty years had been teaching? Spinola again wrote a most earnest remonstrance to the king, assuring him that this was simply to break off the negotiation. It was ridiculous to suppose, he said, that concessions already made by the archdukes, ratification of which on the part of the king had been guaranteed, could now be annulled. Those acquainted with Netherland obstinacy knew better. The very possibility of the king's refusal excited the scorn of the States-General.[7]

Ybarra went about, too, prating to the archdukes and to others of supplies to be sent from Spain sufficient to carry on the war for many years, and of fresh troops to be forwarded immediately by Fuentes. As four millions of crowns a year were known to be required for any tolerable campaigning, such empty vaunts as these were preposterous. The king

[7] Letter to the king, 25 June, 1607, in Gallucci, 332.

knew full well, said Spinola, and had admitted the fact in his letters, that this enormous sum could not be furnished.[8] Moreover, the war cost the Netherlanders far less in proportion. They had river transportation, by which they effected as much in two days as the Catholic army could do in a fortnight, so that every siege was managed with far greater rapidity and less cost by the rebels than by their opponents. As to sending troops from Milan, he had already stated that their arrival would have a fatal effect. The minds of the people were full of suspicion. Every passing rumour excited a prodigious sensation, and the war party was already gaining the upper hand. Spinola warned the king, in the most solemn manner, that if the golden opportunity were now neglected the war would be eternal. This, he said, was more certain than certain. For himself, he had strained every nerve, and would continue to do his best in the interest of peace. If calamity must come, he at least would be held blameless.[9]

Such vehement remonstrances from so eminent a source produced the needful effect. Royal letters were immediately sent, placing full powers of treating in the hands of the marquis, and sending him a ratification of the archduke's agreement. Government moreover expressed boundless confidence in Spinola, and deprecated the idea that Ybarra's mission was in derogation of his authority. He had been sent, it was stated, only to procure that indispensable preliminary to negotiations, the withdrawal of the Dutch fleet, but as this had now been granted, Ybarra was already recalled.

Spinola now determined to send the swift and sure-footed friar, who had made himself so useful in opening the path to discussion, on a secret mission to Spain. Ybarra objected; especially because it would be necessary for him to go through France, where he would be closely questioned by the king. It would be equally dangerous, he said, for the Franciscan

[8] Letter last cited. [9] Ibid.

in that case to tell the truth or to conceal it. But Spinola replied that a poor monk like him could steal through France undiscovered. Moreover, he should be disguised as a footman, travelling in the service of Aurelio Spinola, a relative of the marquis, then proceeding to Madrid. Even should Henry hear of his presence and send for him, was it to be supposed that so practised a hand would not easily parry the strokes of the French king—accomplished fencer as he undoubtedly was? After stealing into and out of Holland as he had so recently done, there was nothing that might not be expected of him. So the wily friar put on the Spinola livery, and, without impediment, accompanied Don Aurelio to Madrid.[10]

Meantime, the French commissioners—Pierre Jeannin, Buzanval, regular resident at the Hague, and De Russy, who was destined to succeed that diplomatist—had arrived in Holland.

The great drama of negotiation, which was now to follow the forty years' tragedy, involved the interests and absorbed the attention of the great Christian powers. Although serious enough in its substance and its probable consequences, its aspect was that of a solemn comedy. There was a secret disposition on the part of each leading personage—with a few exceptions—to make dupes of all the rest. Perhaps this was a necessary result of statesmanship, as it had usually been taught at that epoch.

Paul V., who had succeeded Clement VIII. in 1605, with the brief interlude of the twenty-six days of Leo XI.'s pontificate, was zealous, as might be supposed, to check the dangerous growth of the pestilential little republic of the north. His diplomatic agents, Millino at Madrid, Barberini at Paris, and the accomplished Bentivoglio, who had just been appointed to the nunciatura at Brussels, were indefatigable in their efforts to suppress the heresy and the insolent liberty of which the upstart commonwealth was the embodiment.[11]

[10] Gallucci, 335. [11] Bentivoglio, 548, 549.

Especially Barberini exerted all the powers at his command to bring about a good understanding between the kings of France and Spain. He pictured to Henry, in darkest colours, the blight that would come over religion and civilization if the progress of the rebellious Netherlands could not be arrested. The United Provinces were becoming dangerous, if they remained free, not only to the French kingdom, but to the very existence of monarchy throughout the world.[12]

No potentate was ever more interested, so it was urged, than Henry IV. to bring down the pride of the Dutch rebels. There was always sympathy of thought and action between the Huguenots of France and their co-religionists in Holland. They were all believers alike in Calvinism—a sect inimical not less to temporal monarchies than to the sovereign primacy of the Church[13]—and the tendency and purposes of the French rebels were already sufficiently manifest in their efforts, by means of the so-called cities of security, to erect a state within a state; to introduce, in short, a Dutch republic into France.[14]

A sovereign remedy for the disease of liberty, now threatening to become epidemic in Europe, would be found in a marriage between the second son of the King of Spain and a daughter of France. As the archdukes were childless, it might be easily arranged that this youthful couple should succeed them—the result of which would of course be the reduction of all the Netherlands to their ancient obedience.

It has already been seen, and will become still farther apparent, that nostrums like this were to be recommended in other directions. Meantime, Jeannin and his colleagues made their appearance at the Hague.

If there were a living politician in Europe capable of dealing with Barneveld on even terms, it was no doubt President Jeannin. An ancient Leaguer, an especial adherent of the

[12] Bentivoglio, 548, 549.

[13] "Sette inimica non meno alle monarchie temporali che al sovrano primato ecclesiastico."—Ibid.

[14] "E di voler introdurre un governo di Olanda in Francia."—Ibid.

Duke of Mayenne, he had been deep in all the various plots and counter-plots of the Guises, and often employed by the extinct confederacy in various important intrigues. Being secretly sent to Spain to solicit help for the League after the disasters of Ivry and Arques, he found Philip II. so sincerely imbued with the notion that France was a mere province of Spain, and so entirely bent upon securing the heritage of the Infanta to that large property, as to convince him that the maintenance of the Roman religion was with that monarch only a secondary condition. Aid and assistance for the confederacy were difficult of attainment, unless coupled with the guarantee of the Infanta's rights to reign in France.

The Guise faction being inspired solely by religious motives of the loftiest kind, were naturally dissatisfied with the lukewarmness of his most Catholic Majesty. When therefore the discomfited Mayenne subsequently concluded his bargain with the conqueror of Ivry, it was a matter of course that Jeannin should also make his peace with the successful Huguenot, now become eldest son of the Church. He was very soon taken into especial favour by Henry, who recognised his sagacity, and who knew his hands to be far cleaner than those of the more exalted Leaguers with whom he had dealt. The "good old fellow," as Henry familiarly called him, had not filled his pockets either in serving or when deserting the League. Placed in control of the exchequer at a later period, he was never accused of robbery or peculation. He was a hard-working, not overpaid, very intelligent public functionary. He was made president of the parliament, or supreme tribunal of Burgundy, and minister of state, and was recognised as one of the ablest jurists and most skilful politicians in the kingdom. An elderly man, with a tall, serene forehead, a large dark eye and a long grey beard, he presented an image of vast wisdom and reverend probity. He possessed—an especial treasure for a statesman in that plotting age—a singularly honest visage. Never was that face more guileless, never was his heart more completely worn upon his sleeve, than when he was harbouring the deepest or most

dangerous designs.[15] Such was the "good fellow," whom that skilful reader of men, Henry of France, had sent to represent his interests and his opinions at the approaching conferences.

What were those opinions? Paul V. and his legates Barberini, Millino, and the rest, were well enough aware of the secret strings of the king's policy, and knew how to touch them with skill. Of all things past, Henry perhaps most regretted that not he, but the last and most wretched of the Valois line, was sovereign of France when the States-General came to Paris with that offer of sovereignty which had been so contumaciously refused.

If the object were attainable, the ex-chief of the Huguenots still meant to be king of the Netherlands as sincerely as Philip II. had ever intended to be monarch of France.[16] But Henry was too accurate a calculator of chances, and had bustled too much in the world of realities, to exhaust his strength in striving, year after year, for a manifest impossibility. The enthusiast, who had passed away at last from the dreams of the Escorial into the land of shadows, had spent a lifetime, and melted the wealth of an empire; but universal monarchy had never come forth from his crucible. The French king, although possessed likewise of an almost boundless faculty for ambitious visions, was capable of distinguishing cloud-land from substantial empire. Jeannin, as his envoy, would at any rate not reveal his master's secret aspirations to those with whom he came to deal, as openly as Philip had once unveiled himself to Jeannin.

There could be no doubt that peace at this epoch was the real interest of France. That kingdom was beginning to flourish again, owing to the very considerable administrative genius of Bethune, an accomplished financier according to the lights of the age, and still more by reason of the general impoverishment of the great feudal houses and of the clergy. The result of the almost interminable series of civil and

[15] Grotius, xvi. 740. "Vultus autem sermonisque adeo potens ut cum maxime abderet sensus apertissimus videretur."

[16] See especially Seconde Instruction pour le Sr. Jeannin. Negotiations de M. le President Jeannin, ed. Petitot, 1659, i, 40–43, and 62, 63.

religious wars had been to cause a general redistribution of property. Capital was mainly in the hands of the middle and lower classes, and the consequence of this general circulation of wealth through all the channels of society was precisely what might have been expected, an increase of enterprise and of productive industry in various branches.[17] Although the financial wisdom of the age was doing its best to impede commerce, to prevent the influx of foreign wares, to prohibit the outflow of specie—in obedience to the universal superstition, which was destined to survive so many centuries, that gold and silver alone constituted wealth—while, at the same time, in deference to the idiotic principle of sumptuary legislation, it was vigorously opposing mulberry culture, silk manufactures, and other creations of luxury, which, in spite of the hostility of government sages, were destined from that time forward to become better mines of wealth for the kingdom than the Indies had been for Spain, yet on the whole the arts of peace were in the ascendant in France.

The king, although an unscrupulous, self-seeking despot and the coarsest of voluptuaries, was at least a man of genius. He had also too much shrewd mother-wit to pursue such schemes as experience had shown to possess no reality. The talisman "Espoir," emblazoned on his shield, had led him to so much that it was natural for him at times to think all things possible.

But he knew how to renounce as well as how to dare. He had abandoned his hope to be declared Prince of Wales and successor to the English crown, which he had cherished for a brief period, at the epoch of the Essex conspiracy;[18] he had

[17] "Anche per richezza avanza la città di Parigi tutte le altre perchè essendo la nobiltà rovinata per le guerre passate ed il clero medesimamente per l'istessa causa, cominciando questo da poco in qua a ristorarsi, *resta il solo popolo con denari* nel qual numero sono quelli li quali fanno la facoltà con le liti, con li giudizii e con l'amministrazione della entrate pubbliche perchè si vendono tutte queste cariche a denari contanti però si può imaginare ognuno quanto se le facciano fruttare per farsi padroni di centinaja di migliaja di scudi e vi sono molti di questi tali in Francia ma nella città di Parigi più che in ogni altra."—A. Badoer, Relazione.

[18] "I quali sono che egli pretende di essere dichiarato principe di Galles e successore del regno e spera in questa congiuntura di poter ottenere quello che per il passato no gli è riuscito." —Despatch of Cavalli, Venetian am-

forgotten his magnificent dream of placing the crown of the holy German empire upon his head,[19] and if he still secretly resolved to annex the Netherlands to his realms, and to destroy his excellent ally, the usurping, rebellious, and heretic Dutch republic, he had craft enough to work towards his aim in the dark, and the common sense to know that by now throwing down the mask he would be for ever baffled of his purpose.

The history of France, during the last three-quarters of a century, had made almost every Frenchman, old enough to bear arms, an accomplished soldier. Henry boasted that the kingdom could put three hundred thousand veterans into the field—a high figure, when it is recollected that its population certainly did not exceed fifteen millions.[20] No man however was better aware than he, that in spite of the apparent pacification of parties, the three hundred thousand would not be all on one side, even in case of a foreign war. There were at least four thousand great feudal lords,[21] as faithful to the Huguenot faith and cause as he had been false to both ; many of them still wealthy, notwithstanding the general ruin which had swept over the high nobility, and all of them with vast influence and a splendid following, both among the lesser gentry and the men of lower rank.

Although he kept a Jesuit priest ever at his elbow,[22] and did his best to persuade the world and perhaps himself that

bassador in England, 16 April, 1601. Barozzi, Ser. II. vol. i p. 38.

[19] "Era stata sua Maestà già tempo desiderosa di farsi eleggere re de' Romani ed allora si tratteneva più amorevolmente con quei principi ma scuoprendo poi d'aver debole fondamento per tale pretensione se la è levata del tutto dall' animo."—A. Badoer, Relazione. Ibid.

"Ebbe anco opinione di procurarsi la elezione a re dei Romani dubitando che il re di Spagna avesse questo medesimo pensiero ma avendo scoperto d'altra inclinazione non se n' è molto occupato "—P. Priuli, Relazione.

[20] Computandosi che in tutto il regno vi possono essere quindici milioni d'anime."—Angelo Badoer, Relazione, 1603. Barozzi and Berchet, Ser. II. vol. i.

The population of Paris was estimated by the same ambassador at 400.000. Pietro Priuli (Relazione Francia, 1608) was often told by the king that he had 300.000 veterans in France.

[21] A. Badoer, Relazione. P. Priuli.

[22] "Non avendo li religiosi in Francia maggior protettore di lui tenendo sempre a canto a sì un gesuita suo favoritissimo che mai lo abbandona."—Ibid.

he had become a devout Catholic, in consequence of those memorable five hours' instruction from the Bishop of Bourges, and that there was no hope for France save in its return to the bosom of the Church, he was yet too politic and too far-seeing to doubt that for him to oppress the Protestants would be not only suicidal, but, what was worse in his eyes, ridiculous.

He knew, too, that with thirty or forty thousand fighting-men [23] in the field, with seven hundred and forty churches in the various provinces [24] for their places of worship, with all the best fortresses in France in their possession, with leaders like Rohan, Lesdiguieres, Bouillon, and many others, and with the most virtuous, self-denying, Christian government,[25] established and maintained by themselves, it would be madness for him and his dynasty to deny the Protestants their political and religious liberty, or to attempt a crusade against their brethren in the Netherlands.

France was far more powerful than Spain, although the world had not yet recognised the fact. Yet it would have been difficult for both united to crush the new commonwealth, however paradoxical such a proposition seemed to contemporaries.

Sully was conscientiously in favour of peace, and Sully was the one great minister of France. Not a Lerma, certainly; for France was not Spain, nor was Henry IV. a Philip III. The Huguenot duke was an inferior financier to his Spanish contemporary, if it were the height of financial skill for a minister to exhaust the resources of a great kingdom in order to fill his own pocket. Sully certainly did not neglect his own interests, for he had accumulated a fortune of at least seventy thousand dollars a year, besides a cash capital

[23] Badoer estimates the force at only 25,000.

[24] P. Pruili, Relazione.

[25] "Il governo politico degli eretici," said one who cordially hated heretics, "è così diligente ed accurato quanto ogni altro che sia al mondo ed in questo avanzano veramente loro medesimi perchè *trascurano affatto l'interesse particolare per attender al solo publico*, proprietà contraria alla natura Francese se non vogliano dire che l'interesse pubblico serva per conservazione del particolare."—A. Badoer.

"Le più importanti fortezze del regno sono da essi tenute," &c.—P. Priuli.

estimated at a million and a half.[26] But while enriching himself, he had wonderfully improved the condition of the royal treasury. He had reformed many abuses and opened many new sources of income. He had, of course, not accomplished the whole Augean task of purification. He was a vigorous Huguenot, but no Hercules, and demigods might have shrunk appalled at the filthy mass of corruption which great European kingdoms everywhere presented to the reformer's eye. Compared to the Spanish Government, that of France might almost have been considered virtuous, yet even there everything was venal.

To negotiate was to bribe right and left, and at every step. All the ministers and great functionaries received presents, as a matter of course, and it was necessary to pave the pathway even of their ante-chambers with gold.

The king was fully aware of the practice, but winked at it, because his servants, thus paid enormous sums by the public and by foreign Governments, were less importunate for rewards and salaries from himself.[27]

One man in the kingdom was said to have clean hands, the venerable and sagacious chancellor, Pomponne de Bellièvre. His wife, however, was less scrupulous, and readily disposed of influence and court-favour for a price, without the knowledge, so it was thought, of the great judge.[28]

Jeannin, too, was esteemed a man of personal integrity, ancient Leaguer and tricky politician though he were.

[26] P. Priuli Relazione.

[27] "Con tutti il ministri indifferentemente l'uomo si fa strada in Francia con quei mezzi che ormai mi pare che usino per tutto il mondo . . . . il re medesimo lo sa e lo permette forse perchè profittando li ministri lascino di molestare la S. M. per altre ricompense del servizio che prestano ed essi per questa via pretendono riportare le giuste mercedi delle loro fatiche mentre veggono poter difficilmente sperarne altre dal re."—Ibid.

[28] "Il signore cancelliere solo si mantiene in concetto di molto ingegno ma ha una moglie che supplisce al suo mancamento, ben si crede senza sua saputa, poichè nè anco la moglie basta a fargli fare quello che non conviene."—Ibid. The ambassador adds, on the general subject of corruption and bribery at the French court, "Queste cose sono tanto pubbliche nella corte che non pretendo far torto ad alcuno a riferirle in questo sacrario dove sono nondimento sicuro che saranno custodite con le altre cose dette e da darsi sotto quel sigillo di segretezza che conviene al servizio ed alla riputacione di questo stimatissimo con siglio."

Highest offices of magistracy and judicature, Church and State, were objects of a traffic almost as shameless as in Spain.[29] The ermine was sold at auction, mitres were objects of public barter, Church preferments were bestowed upon female children in their cradles. Yet there was hope in France, notwithstanding that the Pragmatic Sanction of St. Louis, the foundation of the liberties of the Gallican Church, had been annulled by Francis, who had divided the seamless garment of Church patronage with Leo.

Those four thousand great Huguenot lords, those thirty thousand hard-fighting weavers, and blacksmiths, and other plebeians, those seven hundred and forty churches, those very substantial fortresses in every province of the kingdom, were better facts than the Holy Inquisition to preserve a great nation from sinking into the slough of political extinction.

Henry was most anxious that Sully should convert himself to the ancient Church, and the gossips of the day told each other that the duke had named his price for his conversion. To be made high constable of France, it was said would melt the resolve of the stiff Huguenot.[30] To any other inducement or blandishment he was adamant. Whatever truth may have been in such chatter, it is certain that the duke never gratified his master's darling desire.

Yet it was for no lack of attempts and intrigues on the part of the king, although it is not probable that he would have ever consented to bestow that august and coveted dignity upon a Bethune.

[29] "Di qua nasce che oltre alle altre invenzioni s' è introdutto vendere non solo tutti li ufficii e le cariche anco di giustizia ma di più gli stessi servizii della casa del re di maestri di casa dei gentiluomini della camera, dei valletti, ed in sino li capitanati delle guardie della propria persona dei re che non si può dire più; il che rende molto mal sodisfatto la nobiltà alla quale erano in altri tempi riservati per premii de' loro servizii questi luoghi che ora vendendosi convengono cadere in mano a chi ha più denari senza alcuna distinzione de' meriti. E siccome il re non è sotto posto all' odio manco è soggetto all' affezione verso le persone che per esso patiscono nell' interesse come faceva il re passato che per troppa amorevolezza donava più che non aveva."—A Badoer, Relazione.

[30] P. Priuli, Relazione. "Procura (il re) che egli (Sully) si faccia cattolico . . . . seppure avesse a venire a tal risoluzione si è lasciato intendere con i suoi confidenti che non lo farebbe per altro che con essere dichiarato Contestabile di Francia dignità si sublime che tiensi fermo che il re non gliela conferirebbe."

The king did his best by intrigue, by calumny, by tale-bearing, by inventions, to set the Huguenots against each other, and to excite the mutual jealousy of all his most trusted adherents, whether Protestant or Catholic. The most good-humoured, the least vindictive, the most ungrateful, the falsest of mankind, he made it his policy, as well as his pastime, to repeat, with any amount of embroidery that his most florid fancy could devise, every idle story or calumny that could possibly create bitter feeling and make mischief among those who surrounded him. Being aware that this propensity was thoroughly understood, he only multiplied fictions, so cunningly mingled with truths, as to leave his hearers quite unable to know what to believe and what to doubt. By such arts, force being impossible, he hoped one day to sever the band which held the conventicles together, and to reduce Protestantism to insignificance. He would have cut off the head of D'Aubigné or Duplessis Mornay to gain an object, and have not only pardoned but caressed and rewarded Biron when reeking from the conspiracy against his own life and crown, had he been willing to confess and ask pardon for his stupendous crime. He hated vindictive men almost as much as he despised those who were grateful.[31]

[31] "Non vi è delitto per grande che pensassero commettere del quale non sieno sicuri d'ottener il perdono dalla Maestà sua e di siffatta maniera che da quell' ora in poi userà il re con essi gli stessi termini di confidenza che usa con i più antichi e fedeli servitori che abbia, il che non si scuopre solo nel trattare apparente, accarezzando tutti ad uno modo ma nell' esistente ancora perchè quando il re ha bisogno dell' opera di qualcheduno conosciuto che possa valere in quel servizio non distingue antica da nuova, sincera da interessata servitù nè in somma fedeltà infidelità ma chiama S. M. quel tale gli comunica il tutto e l'incarica di negoziare come ad un più vecchio più sincero e più fedele servitore suo. In fine è proprio del re non solo perdonare indifferentemente ad ognuno qual si voglia colpa mentre la confessi e gli dimandi il perdono ma quando conosce un uomo che sia di natura vendicativa l'odia più che per qualsivoglia altro vizio. Usa S. M un altro termine con li suoi servitori credendo convenirgli viver geloso dell' azione di ciascheduno che quando stima che qualche unione di particolari persone possa apportare pregiudizio al servizio suo procura disunirle con porle al punto l'uno contra l'altra non lasciando di ridire tutto quello che gli fosse stato referito ranco con obbligo di segretezza mente ciò possa giovare al suo disegno ed orna la relazione con quei fregi d'invenzione che vengono felicemente composti dal suo florido ingegno, quando conosca potere con essi generare e nutrire gelosia fra quelli amici, per disunirli e farli anco venire alli mani come molte volte

He was therefore far from preferring Sully to Villeroy or Jeannin, but he was perfectly aware that, infinancial matters at least, the duke was his best friend and an important pillar of the state.

The minister had succeeded in raising the annual revenue of France to nearly eleven millions of dollars, and in reducing the annual expenditures to a little more than ten millions.[32] To have a balance on the right side of the public ledger was a feat less easily accomplished in those days even than in our own. Could the duke have restrained his sovereign's reckless extravagance in buildings, parks, hunting establishments, and harems, he might have accomplished even greater miracles. He lectured the king roundly, as a parent might remonstrate with a prodigal son, but it was impossible even for a Sully to rescue that hoary-headed and most indomitable youth from wantonness and riotous living. The civil-list of the king amounted to more than one-tenth of the whole revenue.[33]

On the whole, however, it was clear, as France was then constituted and administered, that a general peace would be, for the time at least, most conducive to its interests, and Henry and his great minister were sincerely desirous of bringing about that result.

Preliminaries for a negotiation which should terminate this mighty war were now accordingly to be laid down at the Hague. Yet it would seem rather difficult to effect a compromise. Besides the powers less interested, but which nevertheless sent representatives to watch the proceedings—such as Sweden, Denmark, Brandenburg, the Elector Pala-

accade. Con questo arriva S. M al fine che desidera, di dissolver le con venticole delle quali vive gelosissimo ma ne conviene provare anco danno notabile,perchè conosciuto ormai la sua natura non vi è chi si fidi di dirgli molte cose che saria suo servizio il saperle. Conosce il re medesimo questa sua facilità di ridire ma essendogli impossibile il mutare natura per rimediarvi in quanto può fra le cose vere mischia con arte dell' invenzione per ridurre l'uomo a non saper che si credere."—A. Badoer, Relazione.

[32] Badoer says 12,000,000 of scudi, (four to the pound sterling), of which however 6,000.000 were pledged. P. Priuli puts the whole receipts of the exchequer at 10,727,907 dollars, and the expenses at 10,333,114.

[33] To 1,233,632 dollars, according to P. Priuli.

tine—there were Spain, France, England, the republic, and the archdukes.

Spain knew very well that she could not continue the war; but she hoped by some quibbling recognition of an impossible independence to recover that authority over her ancient vassals which the sword had for the time struck down. Distraction in councils, personal rivalries, the well-known incapacity of a people to govern itself, commercial greediness, provincial hatreds, envies and jealousies, would soon reduce that jumble of cities and villages, which aped the airs of sovereignty, into insignificance and confusion. Adroit management would easily re-assert afterwards the sovereignty of the Lord's anointed. That a republic of freemen, a federation of independent states, could take its place among the nations did not deserve a serious thought.

Spain in her heart preferred therefore to treat. It was however indispensable that the Netherlands should re-establish the Catholic religion throughout the land, should abstain then and for ever from all insolent pretences to trade with India or America, and should punish such of their citizens as attempted to make voyages to the one or the other. With these trifling exceptions, the court of Madrid would look with favour on propositions made in behalf of the rebels.

France, as we have seen, secretly aspired to the sovereignty of all the Netherlands, if it could be had. She was alsc extremely in favour of excluding the Hollanders from the Indies, East and West. The king, fired with the achievements of the republic at sea, and admiring their great schemes for founding empires at the antipodes by means of commercial corporations, was very desirous of appropriating to his own benefit the experience, the audacity, the perseverance, the skill and the capital of their merchants and mariners. He secretly instructed his commissioners, therefore, and repeatedly urged it upon them, to do their best to procure the renunciation, on the part of the republic, of the Indian trade, and to contrive the transplantation into France of the mighty

trading companies, so successfully established in Holland and Zeeland.[34]

The plot thus to deprive the provinces of their India trade was supposed by the statesmen of the republic to have been formed in connivance with Spain. That power, finding itself half pushed from its seat of power in the East by the "grand and infallible society created by the United Provinces,"[35] would be but too happy to make use of this French intrigue in order to force the intruding Dutch navy from its conquests.

Olden-Barneveld, too politic to offend the powerful and treacherous ally by a flat refusal, said that the king's friendship was more precious than the India trade. At the same time he warned the French Government that, if they ruined the Dutch East India Company, "neither France nor any other nation would ever put its nose into India again."[36]

James of England, too, flattered himself that he could win for England that sovereignty of the Netherlands which England as well as France had so decidedly refused. The marriage of Prince Henry with the Spanish Infanta was the bait, steadily dangled before him by the politicians of the Spanish court, and he deluded himself with the thought that the Catholic king, on the death of the childless archdukes, would make his son and daughter-in-law a present of the obedient Netherlands. He already had some of the most important places in the United Netherlands—the famous cautionary towns—in his grasp, and it should go hard but he would twist that possession into a sovereignty over the whole land. As for recognising the rebel provinces as an independent sovereignty, that was most abhorrent to him. Such a tampering with the great principles of Government was an offence against all crowned heads, a crime in which he was unwilling to participate.

[34] Negotiations de Jeannin, i. 71, 153, 183 (especially 196, 219). Compare Gallucci, 345, 346, and see especially the memoir of F. Aerssens, in Deventer, iii. 26–31. Correspondence between Henry IV. and Olden-Barneveld, pp. 46–50. Ibid.

[35] Memoir of Aerssens, *ubi sup.*

[36] Deventer, iii. 50.

His instinct against rebellion seemed like second sight. The king might almost be imagined to have foreseen in the dim future those memorable months in which the proudest triumph of the Dutch commonwealth was to be registered before the forum of Christendom at the congress of Westphalia, and in which the solemn trial and execution of his own son and successor, with the transformation of the monarchy of the Tudors and Stuarts into a British republic, were simultaneously to startle the world. But it hardly needed the gift of prophecy to inspire James with a fear of revolutions.

He was secretly desirous therefore, sustained by Salisbury and his other advisers, of effecting the restoration of the provinces to the dominion of his most Catholic Majesty.[37] It was of course the interest of England that the Netherland rebels should renounce the India trade. So would James be spared the expense and trouble of war; so would the great doctrines of divine right be upheld; so would the way be paved towards the ultimate absorption of the Netherlands by England. Whether his theological expositions would find as attentive pupils when the pope's authority had been re-established over all his neighbours; whether the Catholic rebels in Ireland would become more tranquil by the subjugation of the Protestant rebels in Holland; whether the principles of Guy Fawkes might not find more effective application, with no bulwark beyond the seas against the incursion of such practitioners—all this he did not perhaps sufficiently ponder.

Thus far had the discursive mind of James wandered from the position which it occupied at the epoch of Maximilian de Bethune's memorable embassy to England.

The archdukes were disposed to quiet. On them fell the burthen of the war. Their little sovereignty, where—if they could only be allowed to expend the money squeezed from the obedient provinces in court diversions, stately architecture, splendid encouragement of the fine arts, and luxurious living,

[37] Negotiations de Jeannin, i 128, 129, 152, 184, 199, 217, 240, 524, *et passim.*

surrounded by a train of great nobles, fit to command regiments in the field or assist in the counsels of state, but chiefly occupied in putting dishes on the court table, handing ewers and napkins to their Highnesses, or in still more menial offices—so much enjoyment might be had, was reduced to a mere parade ground for Spanish soldiery.[38] It was ridiculous, said the politicians of Madrid, to suppose that a great empire like Spain would not be continually at war in one direction or another, and would not perpetually require the use of large armies. Where then could there be a better mustering place for their forces than those very provinces, so easy of access, so opulent, so conveniently situate in the neighbourhood of Spain's most insolent enemies ?[39] It was all very fine for the archduke, who knew nothing of war, they declared, who had no hope of children, who longed only for a life of inglorious ease, such as he could have had as archbishop, to prate of peace and thus to compromise the dignity of the realm. On the contrary, by making proper use of the Netherlands, the repose and grandeur of the monarchy would be secured, even should the war become eternal.[40]

This prospect, not agreeable certainly for the archdukes or their subjects, was but little admired outside the Spanish court.

Such then were the sentiments of the archdukes, and such the schemes and visions of Spain, France, and England. On two or three points, those great powers were mainly, if unconsciously, agreed. The Netherlands should not be sovereign ; they should renounce the India navigation ; they should consent to the re-establishment of the Catholic religion.

On the other hand, the States-General knew their own minds, and made not the slightest secret of their intentions.

[38] "Il se fait servir par les plus grands et même par ses confrères et compagnons d'ordre jusques aux choses indignes d'être nommées. . . . .

"L'on voit chacun jour grand nombre de noblesse, qui pourroit bien s'employer à la tête d'une compagnie de cavalerie ou d'un regiment, ne s'exercer qu'à porter des plats sur une table, et d'autres encore à d'autres choses moins nécessaires." — Letter from Brussels in P. de l'Estoile. Supplement au Journal du Règne de Henri IV., 1599–1606, tom. iii. pp. 460, 461. In Petitot, vol. xlvii.

[39] Bentivoglio, 564.

[40] Ibid.

They would be sovereign, they would not renounce the India trade, they would not agree to the re-establishment of the Catholic religion.

Could the issue of the proposed negotiations be thought hopeful, or was another half century of warfare impending?

On the 28th May the French commissioners came before the States-General.[41]

There had been many wild rumours flying through the provinces in regard to the king's secret designs upon the republic, especially since the visit made to the Hague a twelvemonth before by Francis Aerssens, States' resident at the French court.[42] That diplomatist, as we know, had been secretly commissioned by Henry to feel the public pulse in regard to the sovereignty, so far as that could be done by very private and delicate fingering. Although only two or three personages had been dealt with—the suggestions being made as the private views of the ambassadors only—there had been much gossip on the subject, not only in the Netherlands, but at the English and Spanish courts. Throughout the commonwealth there was a belief that Henry wished to make himself king of the country.

As this happened to be the fact, it was natural that the President, according to the statecraft of his school, should deny it at once, and with an air of gentle melancholy.

Wearing therefore his most ingenuous expression, Jeannin addressed the assembly.

He assured the States that the king had never forgotten how much assistance he had received from them when he was struggling to conquer the kingdom legally belonging to him, and at a time when they too were fighting in their own country for their very existence.[43]

The king thought that he had given so many proofs of his sincere friendship as to make doubt impossible; but he had found the contrary, for the States had accorded an armistice, and listened to overtures of peace, without deigning to con-

[41] Meteren, 551. Jeannin, i. 109. [42] Wagenaar, ix. 261, *seqq.*
[43] Jeannin, i. 109.

sult him on the subject. They had proved, by beginning and concluding so important a transaction without his knowledge, that they regarded him with suspicion, and had no respect for his name. Whence came the causes of that suspicion it was difficult to imagine, unless from certain false rumours of propositions said to have been put forward in his behalf, although he had never authorised anyone to make them, by which men had been induced to believe that he aspired to the sovereignty of the provinces.

"This falsehood," continued the candid President, "has cut our king to the heart, wounding him more deeply than anything else could have done. To make the armistice without his knowledge showed merely your contempt for him, and your want of faith in him. But he blamed not the action in itself, since you deemed it for your good, and God grant that you may not have been deceived. But to pretend that his Majesty wished to grow great at your expense, this was to do a wrong to his reputation, to his good faith, and to the desire which he has always shown to secure the prosperity of your state."[44]

Much more spoke Jeannin, in this vein, assuring the assembly that those abominable falsehoods proceeded from the enemies of the king, and were designed expressly to sow discord and suspicion in the provinces. The reader, already aware of the minute and detailed arrangements made by Henry and his ministers for obtaining the sovereignty of the United Provinces and destroying their liberties, will know how to appreciate the eloquence of the ingenuous President.

After the usual commonplaces concerning the royal desire to protect his allies against wrong and oppression, and to advance their interests, the President suggested that the States should forthwith communicate the pending deliberations to all the kings and princes who had favoured their cause, and especially to the King of England, who had so thoroughly proved his desire to promote their welfare.[45]

[44] Jeannin, i. 110. [45] Ibid. 113.

As Jeannin had been secretly directed to pave the way by all possible means for the king's sovereignty over the provinces ; as he was not long afterwards to receive explicit instructions to expend as much money as might be necessary in bribing Prince Maurice, Count Lewis William, Barneveld and his son, together with such others as might seem worth purchasing, in order to assist Henry in becoming monarch of their country ;[46] and as the English king was at that moment represented in Henry's private letters to the commissioners as actually loathing the liberty, power, and prosperity of the provinces,[47] it must be conceded that the President had acquitted himself very handsomely in his first oration.

Such was the virtue of his honest face.

Barneveld answered with generalities and commonplaces. No man knew better than the Advocate the exact position of affairs ; no man had more profoundly fathomed the present purposes of the French king ; no man had more acutely scanned his character. But he knew the critical position of the commonwealth. He knew that, although the public revenue might be raised by extraordinary and spasmodic exertion to nearly[48] a million sterling, a larger income than had ever been at the disposition of the great Queen of England, the annual deficit might be six millions of florins —more than half the revenue—if the war continued,[49] and that there was necessity of peace, could the substantial objects of the war be now obtained. He was well aware too of the subtle and scheming brain which lay hid beneath that reverend brow of the President, although he felt capable of coping with him in debate or intrigue. Doubtless he was inspired with as much ardour for the intellectual conflict as Henry might have experienced on some great field-day with Alexander Farnese.

On this occasion, however, Barneveld preferred to glide gently over the rumours concerning Henry's schemes. Those reports had doubtless emanated, he said, from the enemies of

[46] Jeannin, i. 43, 62, 63, 69, 70, 71.
[47] Ibid. 157.
[48] Wagenaar, ix. 274, 275.
[49] Ibid. 277.

Netherland prosperity. The private conclusion of the armistice he defended on the ground of necessity, and of temporary financial embarrassment, and he promised that deputies should at once be appointed to confer with the royal commissioners in regard to the whole subject.

In private, he assured Jeannin that the communications of Aerssens had only been discussed in secret, and had not been confided to more than three or four persons.[50]

The Advocate, although the leader of the peace party, was by no means over anxious for peace.

The object of much insane obloquy, because disposed to secure that blessing for his country on the basis of freedom and independence, he was not disposed to trust in the sincerity of the archdukes, or the Spanish court, or the French king. "*Timeo Danaos etiam dona ferentes*," he had lately said to Aerssens.[51] Knowing that the resistance of the Netherlands had been forty years long the bulwark of Europe against the designs of the Spaniard for universal empire, he believed the republic justified in expecting the support of the leading powers in the negotiations now proposed. "Had it not been for the opposition of these provinces," he said, "he might, in the opinion of the wisest, have long ago been monarch of all Europe, with small expense of men, money, or credit." [52] He was far from believing therefore that Spain, which had sacrificed, according to his estimate, three hundred thousand soldiers and two hundred million ducats in vain endeavours to destroy the resistance of the United Provinces, was now ready to lay aside her vengeance and submit to a sincere peace. Rather he thought to see "the lambkins, now frisking so innocently about the commonwealth, suddenly transform themselves into lions and wolves."[53] It would be a fatal error, he said, to precipitate the dear fatherland into the net of a simulated negotiation, from unwise impatience for peace. The Netherlanders were a simple, truthful

[50] Resol. Holl. 146, 147. Wagenaar, ix. 270.
[51] Olden-Barneveld to Aerssens, 2 June, 1607, in Deventer, iii. 135.
[52] Memoire van Olden-Barnevelt, in Deventer, iii. cxcix. 137–147. [53] Ibid.

people and could hope for no advantage in dealing with Spanish friars, nor discover all the danger and deceit lurking beneath their fair words. Thus the man, whom his enemies perpetually accused of being bought by the enemy, of wishing peace at any price, of wishing to bring back the Catholic party and ecclesiastical influence to the Netherlands, was vigorously denouncing a precipitate peace, and warning his countrymen of the danger of premature negotiations.

"As one can hardly know the purity and value of gold," he said, "without testing it, so it is much more difficult to distinguish a false peace from a genuine one; for one can never touch it nor taste it, and one learns the difference when one is cheated and lost. Ignorant people think peace negotiations as simple as a private lawsuit. Many sensible persons even think that, the enemy once recognising us for a free, sovereign state, we shall be in the same position as England and France, which powers have lately made peace with the archdukes and with Spain. But we shall find a mighty difference. Moreover, in those kingdoms the Spanish king has since the peace been ever busy corrupting their officers of state and their subjects, and exciting rebellion and murder within their realms, as all the world must confess. And the English merchants complain that they have suffered more injustice, violence, and wrong from the Spaniards since the peace than they did during the war."[54]

The Advocate also reminded his countrymen that the archduke, being a vassal of Spain, could not bind that power by his own signature, and that there was no proof that the king would renounce his pretended rights to the provinces. If he affected to do so, it would only be to put the republic to sleep. He referred, with much significance, to the late proceedings of the Admiral of Arragon at Emmerich, who refused to release that city according to his plighted word, saying roundly that whatever he might sign and seal one day he would not hesitate absolutely to violate on the next if the king's service was thereby to be benefited.[55] With such

[54] Memoire van Olden-Barnevelt, in Deventer, iii. cxcix. 137–147. [55] Ibid.

people, who had always learned law-doctors and ghostly confessors to strengthen and to absolve them, they could never expect anything but broken faith and contempt for treaties however solemnly ratified.

Should an armistice be agreed upon and negotiations begun, the Advocate urged that the work of corruption and bribery would not be a moment delayed, and although the Netherlanders were above all nations a true and faithful race, it could hardly be hoped that no individuals would be gained over by the enemy.[56]

"For the whole country," said Barneveld, "would swarm with Jesuits, priests, and monks, with calumnies and corruptions—the machinery by which the enemy is wont to produce discord, relying for success upon the well-known maxim of Philip of Macedon, who considered no city impregnable into which he could send an ass laden with gold." [57]

The Advocate was charged too with being unfriendly to the India trade, especially to the West India Company.

He took the opportunity, however, to enlarge with emphasis and eloquence upon that traffic as constituting the very life-blood of the country.

"The commerce with the East Indies is going on so prosperously," he said, "that not only our own inhabitants but all strangers are amazed. The West India Company is sufficiently prepared, and will cost the commonwealth so little, that the investment will be inconsiderable in comparison with the profits. And all our dangers and difficulties have nearly vanished since the magnificent victory of Gibraltar, by which the enemy's ships, artillery, and sailors have been annihilated, and proof afforded that the Spanish galleys are not so terrible as they pretend to be. By means of this trade to both the Indies, matters will soon be brought into such condition that the Spaniards will be driven out of all those regions and deprived of their traffic. Thus will the great wolf's teeth be pulled out, and we need have no farther fear of his biting again. Then we may hope for a firm and assured peace, and

[56] Memoire van Olden-Barnevelt, in Deventer, iii. cxcix. 137–147. [57] Ibid.

may keep the Indies, with the whole navigation thereon depending, for ourselves, sharing it freely and in common with our allies." [58]

Certainly no statesman could more strongly depict the dangers of a pusillanimous treaty, and the splendid future of the republic, if she held fast to her resolve for political independence, free religion, and free trade, than did the great Advocate at this momentous epoch of European history.

Had he really dreamed of surrendering the republic to Spain, that republic whose resistance ever since the middle of the previous century had been all that had saved Europe, in the opinion of learned and experienced thinkers, from the universal empire of Spain — had the calumnies, or even a thousandth part of the calumnies, against him been true — how different might have been the history of human liberty !

Soon afterwards, in accordance with the suggestions of the French king and with their own previous intentions, a special legation was despatched by the States to England, in order to notify the approaching conferences to the sovereign of that country, and to invite his participation in the proceedings.

The States' envoys were graciously received by James, who soon appointed Richard Spencer and Ralph Winwood as commissioners to the Hague, duly instructed to assist at the deliberations, and especially to keep a sharp watch upon French intrigues. There were also missions and invitations to Denmark and to the Electors Palatine and of Brandenburg, the two latter potentates having, during the past three years, assisted the States with a hundred thousand florins annually.[59]

The news of the great victory at Gibraltar had reached the Netherlands almost simultaneously with the arrival of the French commissioners. It was thought probable that John Neyen had received the weighty intelligence some days earlier, and the intense eagerness of the archdukes and of the Spanish Government to procure the recal of the Dutch fleet

[58] Memoire van Olden-Barnevelt in Deventer, iii. cxcix. 137–147.
[59] Wagenaar, ix. 274.

was thus satisfactorily explained. Very naturally this magnificent success, clouded though it was by the death of the hero to whom it was due, increased the confidence of the States in the justice of their cause and the strength of their position.

Once more, it is not entirely idle to consider the effect of scientific progress on the march of human affairs, as so often exemplified in history. Whether that half-century of continuous war would have been possible with the artillery, means of locomotion, and other machinery of destruction and communication now so terribly familiar to the world, can hardly be a question. The preterhuman prolixity of negotiation which appals us in the days when steam and electricity had not yet annihilated time and space, ought also to be obsolete. At a period when the news of a great victory was thirty days on its travels from Gibraltar to Flushing, aged counsellors justified themselves in a solemn consumption of time such as might have exasperated Jared or Methuselah in his boyhood. Men fought as if war was the normal condition of humanity, and negotiated as if they were all immortal. But has the art political kept pace with the advancement of physical science? If history be valuable for the examples it furnishes both for imitation and avoidance, then the process by which these peace conferences were initiated and conducted may be wholesome food for reflection.

John Neyen, who, since his secret transactions already described at the Hague and Fort Lillo, had been speeding back and forth between Brussels, London, and Madrid, had once more returned to the Netherlands, and had been permitted to reside privately at Delft until the king's ratification should arrive from Spain.[60]

While thus established, the industrious friar had occupied his leisure in studying the situation of affairs. Especially he had felt inclined to renew some of those little commercial speculations which had recently proved so comfortable in the case of Dirk van der Does. Recorder Cornelius Aerssens

[60] Meteren, 553.

came frequently to visit him, with the private consent of the Government, and it at once struck the friar that Cornelius would be a judicious investment. So he informed the recorder that the archdukes had been much touched with his adroitness and zeal in facilitating the entrance of their secret agent into the presence of the Prince and the Advocate. Cruwél, in whose company the disguised Neyen had made his first journey to the Hague, was a near relative of Aerssens. The honest monk accordingly, in recognition of past and expected services, begged one day the recorder's acceptance of a bill, drawn by Marquis Spinola on Henry Beckman, merchant of Amsterdam, for eighty thousand ducats. He also produced a diamond ring, valued at ten thousand florins, which he ventured to think worthy the acceptance of Madame Aerssens. Furthermore, he declared himself ready to pay fifteen thousand crowns in cash, on account of the bill, whenever it might be desired, and observed that the archdukes had ordered the house which the recorder had formerly occupied in Brussels to be reconveyed to him.[61] Other good things were in store, it was delicately hinted, as soon as they had been earned.

Aerssens expressed his thanks for the house, which, he said, legally belonged to him according to the terms of the surrender of Brussels. He hesitated in regard to the rest, but decided finally to accept the bill of exchange and the diamond, apprising Prince Maurice and Olden-Barneveld of the fact, however, on his return to the Hague.[62] Being subsequently summoned by Neyen to accept the fifteen thousand crowns, he felt embarrassed at the compromising position in which he had placed himself. He decided accordingly to make a public statement of the affair to the States-General. This was donè, and the States placed the ring and the bill in the hands of their treasurer, Joris de Bie.

The recorder never got the eighty thousand ducats, nor his wife the diamond; but although there had been no duplicity on his part, he got plenty of slander. His evil genius had

[61] Wagenaar, ix. 271, *et seq.* Grotius, xvi. 741, 742. [62] Ibid.

prompted him, not to listen seriously to the temptings of the monk, but to deal with him on his own terms. He was obliged to justify himself against public suspicion with explanations and pamphlets, but some taint of the calumny stuck by him to the last.

Meantime, the three months allotted for the reception of Philip's ratification had nearly expired. In March, the royal Government had expressly consented that the archdukes should treat with the rebels on the ground of their independence. In June that royal permission had been withdrawn, exactly because the independence could never be acknowledged. Albert, naturally enough indignant at such double-dealing, wrote to the king that his disapprobation was incomprehensible, as the concession of independence had been made by direct command of Philip. "I am much amazed," he said, "that, having treated with the islanders on condition of leaving them free, by express order of your Majesty (which you must doubtless very well remember), your Majesty now reproves my conduct, and declares your dissatisfaction."[63] At last, on the 23rd July, Spinola requested a safe conduct for Louis Verreyken, auditor of the council at Brussels, to come to the Hague.[64]

On the 23rd of July that functionary accordingly arrived. He came before Prince Maurice and fifty deputies of the States-General, and exhibited the document. At the same time he urged them, now that the long-desired ratification had been produced, to fulfil at once their promise, and to recal their fleet from the coast of Spain.[65]

Verreyken was requested to withdraw while the instrument was examined. When recalled, he was informed that the States had the most staightforward intention to negotiate, but that the royal document did not at all answer their expectation. As few of the delegates could read Spanish, it would first of all be necessary to cause it to be translated.

[63] Extract from MS. Letter cited by Deventer, iii. xxvi.
[64] Wagenaar, ix. 278.
[65] Meteren, 552, 553. Gallucci, 336. Wagenaar, 278, *seqq.*

When that was done they would be able to express their opinion concerning it and come to a decision in regard to the recal of the fleet. This ended the proceedings on that occasion.

Next day Prince Maurice invited Verreyken and others to dine. After dinner the stadholder informed him that the answer of the States might soon be expected; at the same time expressing his regret that the king should have sent such an instrument. It was very necessary, said the prince, to have plain speaking, and he, for one, had never believed that the king would send a proper ratification. The one exhibited was not at all to the purpose. The king was expected to express himself as clearly as the archdukes had done in their instrument. He must agree to treat with the States-General as with people entirely free, over whom he claimed no authority. If the king should refuse to make this public declaration, the States would at once break off all negotiations.[66]

Three days afterwards, seven deputies conferred with Verreyken. Barneveld, as spokesman, declared that, so far as the provinces were concerned, the path was plain and open to an honest, ingenuous, lasting peace, but that the manner of dealing on the other side was artificial and provocative of suspicion.[67] A most important line, which had been placed by the States at the very beginning of the form suggested by them, was wanting in the ratification now received. This hardly seemed an accidental omission. The whole document was constrained and defective. It was necessary to deal with Netherlanders in clear and simple language. The basis of any possible negotiation was that the provinces were to be treated with as and called entirely free. Unless this was done negotiations were impossible. The States-General were not so unskilled in affairs as to be ignorant that the king and the archdukes were quite capable, at a future day, of declaring themselves untrammelled by any conditions. They would boast that conventions with rebels and pledges to

[66] Gallucci, *ubi sup.* [67] Ibid.

heretics were alike invalid. If Verreyken had brought no better document than the one presented, he had better go at once. His stay in the provinces was superfluous.[68]

At a subsequent interview Barneveld informed Verreyken that the king's confirmation had been unanimously rejected by the States-General as deficient both in form and substance. He added that the people of the provinces were growing very lukewarm in regard to peace, that Prince Maurice opposed it, that many persons regretted the length to which the negotiations had already gone. Difficult as it seemed to be to recede, the archdukes might be certain that a complete rupture was imminent.

All these private conversations of Barneveld, who was known to be the chief of the peace party, were duly reported by Verreyken in secret notes to the archduke and to Spinola. Of course they produced their effect. It surely might have been seen that the tricks and shifts of an antiquated diplomacy were entirely out of place if any wholesome result were desired. But the habit of dissimulation was inveterate. That the man who cannot dissemble is unfit to reign, was perhaps the only one of his father's golden rules which Philip III. could thoroughly comprehend, even if it be assumed that the monarch was at all consulted in regard to this most important transaction of his life. Verreyken and the friar knew very well when they brought the document that it would be spurned by the States, and yet they were also thoroughly aware that it was the king's interest to begin the negotiations as soon as possible. When thus privately and solemnly assured by the Advocate that they were really wasting their time by being the bearers of these royal evasions, they learned therefore nothing positively new, but were able to assure their employers that to thoroughly disgust the peace party was not precisely the mode of terminating the war.

Verreyken now received public and formal notification that a new instrument must be procured from the king. In the ratification which had been sent, that monarch spoke of the

[68] Gallucci, 337, 338.

archdukes as princes and sovereign proprietors of all the Netherlands. The clause by which, according to the form prescribed by the States, and already adopted by the archdukes, the United Provinces were described as free countries over which no authority was claimed had been calmly omitted, as if, by such a subterfuge, the independence of the republic could be winked out of existence. Furthermore, it was objected that the document was in Spanish, that it was upon paper instead of parchment, that it was not sealed with the great, but with the little seal, and that it was subscribed "I the King." This signature might be very appropriate for decrees issued by a monarch to his vassals, but could not be rightly appended, it was urged, to an instrument addressed to a foreign power. Potentates, treating with the States-General of the United Provinces, were expected to sign their names.

Whatever may be thought of the technical requirements in regard to the parchment, the signature, and the seal, it would be difficult to characterize too strongly the polity of the Spanish Government in the most essential point. To seek relief from the necessity of recognising—at least in the sense of similitude, according to the subtlety of Bentivoglio—the freedom of the provinces, simply by running the pen through the most important line of a most important document, was diplomacy in its dotage. Had not Marquis Spinola, a man who could use his brains and his pen as well as his sword, expressly implored the politicians of Madrid not to change even a comma in the form of ratification which he sent to Spain?

Verreyken, placed face to face with plain-spoken, straightforward, strong-minded men, felt the dreary absurdity of the position. He could only stammer a ridiculous excuse about the clause, having been accidentally left out by a copying secretary.[69] To represent so important an omission as a clerical error was almost as great an absurdity as the original device; but it was necessary for Verreyken to say something.

[69] Grotius, xvi. 744, 745. Meteren, 352. Wagenaar, ix. 279.

He promised, however, that the form prescribed by the States should be again transmitted to Madrid, and expressed confidence that the ratification would now be sent as desired. Meantime he trusted that the fleet would be at once recalled.

This at once created a stormy debate which lasted many days, both within the walls of the House of Assembly and out of doors. Prince Maurice bitterly denounced the proposition, and asserted the necessity rather of sending out more ships than of permitting their cruisers to return. It was well known that the Spanish Government, since the destruction of Avila's fleet, had been straining every nerve to procure and equip other war-vessels, and that even the Duke of Lerma had offered a small portion of his immense plunderings to the crown in aid of naval armaments.[70]

On the other hand, Barneveld urged that the States, in the preliminary armistice, had already agreed to send no munitions nor reinforcements to the fleet already cruising on the coasts of the peninsula. It would be better, therefore, to recal those ships than to leave them where they could not be victualled nor strengthened without a violation of good faith.

These opinions prevailed, and on the 9th August, Verreyken was summoned before the Assembly, and informed by Barneveld that the States had decided to withdraw the fleet, and to declare invalid all prizes made six weeks after that date. This was done, it was said, out of respect to the archdukes, to whom no blame was imputed for the negligence displayed in regard to the ratification. Furthermore, the auditor was requested to inform his masters that the documents brought from Spain were not satisfactory, and he was furnished with a draught, made both in Latin and French. With this form, it was added, the king was to comply within six weeks, if he desired to proceed further in negotiations with the States.[71]

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Verreyken thanked the States-General, made the best of promises, and courteously withdrew.

[70] Wagenaar, ix. 280, 281. [71] Meteren, 352. Wagenaar, ix. 281.

Next day, however, just as his preparations for departure had been made, he was once more summoned before the Assembly to meet with a somewhat disagreeable surprise. Barneveld, speaking as usual in behalf of the States-General, publicly produced Spinola's bill of exchange for eighty thousand ducats, the diamond ring intended for Madame Aerssens, and the gold chain given to Dirk van der Does, and expressed the feelings of the republican Government in regard to those barefaced attempts of Friar John at bribery and corruption, in very scornful language.[72] Netherlanders were not to be bought—so the agent of Spain and of the archdukes was informed—and, even if the citizens were venal, it would be necessary in a popular Government to buy up the whole nation. "It is not in our commonwealth as in despotisms," said the Advocate, "where affairs of state are directed by the nod of two or three individuals, while the rest of the inhabitants are a mob of slaves. By turns, we all govern and are governed. This great council, this senate—should it seem not sufficiently fortified against your presents—could easily be enlarged. Here is your chain, your ring, your banker's draught. Take them all back to your masters. Such gifts are not necessary to ensure a just peace, while to accept them would be a crime against liberty, which we are incapable of committing."[73]

Verreyken, astonished and abashed, could answer little save to mutter a few words about the greediness of monks, who, judging everyone else by themselves, thought no one inaccessible to a bribe.[74] He protested the innocence of the archdukes in the matter, who had given no directions to bribe, and who were quite ignorant that the attempt had been made.

He did not explain by whose authority the chain, the ring, and the draught upon Beckman had been furnished to the friar.

Meantime that ecclesiastic was cheerfully wending his way

[72] Meteren, 553vo. Grotius, xvi. 745. Wagenaar, ix. 283.

[73] Ibid.

[74] "Nec mirum si monachi avarum imprimis hominum genus alios ex se æstimarent."—Grotius, *ubi sup.*

to Spain in search of the new ratification, leaving his colleague vicariously to bide the pelting of the republican storm, and to return somewhat weather-beaten to Brussels.

During the suspension, thus ridiculously and gratuitously caused, of preliminaries which had already lasted the better portion of a year, party-spirit was rising day by day higher, and spreading more widely throughout the provinces Opinions and sentiments were now sharply defined and loudly announced. The clergy, from a thousand pulpits, thundered against the peace, exposing the insidious practices, the faithless promises, the monkish corruptions, by which the attempt was making to reduce the free republic once more into vassalage to Spain. The people everywhere listened eagerly and applauded. Especially the mariners, cordwainers, smiths, ship-chandlers, boatmen, the tapestry weavers, lace manufacturers, shopkeepers, and, above all, the India merchants and stockholders in the great commercial companies for the East and West, lifted up their voices for war. This was the party of Prince Maurice, who made no secret of his sentiments, and opposed, publicly and privately, the resumption of negotiations. Doubtless his adherents were the most numerous portion of the population.

Barneveld, however, was omnipotent with the municipal governments, and although many individuals in those bodies were deeply interested in the India navigation and the great corporations, the Advocate turned them as usual around his finger.

Ever since the memorable day of Nieuport there had been no love lost between the stadholder and the Advocate. They had been nominally reconciled to each other, and had, until lately, acted with tolerable harmony, but each was thoroughly conscious of the divergence of their respective aims.

Exactly at this period the long-smothered resentment of Maurice against his old preceptor, counsellor, and, as he believed, betrayer, flamed forth anew. He was indignant that a man, so infinitely beneath him in degree, should thus dare to cross his plans, to hazard, as he believed, the best

interests of the state, and to interfere with the course of his legitimate ambition.[75] There was more glory for a great soldier to earn in future battle-fields, a higher position before the world to be won. He had a right by birth, by personal and family service, to claim admittance among the monarchs of Europe. The pistol of Balthasar Gerard had alone prevented the elevation of his father to the sovereignty of the provinces. The patents, wanting only a few formalities, were still in possession of the son. As the war went on—and nothing but blind belief in Spanish treachery could cause the acceptance of a peace which would be found to mean slavery —there was no height to which he might not climb. With the return of peace and submission, his occupation would be gone, obscurity and poverty the sole recompense for his life-long services and the sacrifices of his family. The memory of the secret movements twice made but a few years before to elevate him to the sovereignty, and which he believed to have been baffled by the Advocate, doubtless rankled in his breast. He did not forget that when the subject had been discussed by the favourers of the scheme in Barneveld's own house, Barneveld himself had prophesied that one day or another "the rights would burst out which his Excellency had to become prince of the provinces, on strength of the signed and sealed documents addressed to the late Prince of Orange; that he had further alluded to the efforts then on foot to make him Duke of Gelderland; adding with a sneer, that Zeeland was all agog on the subject, while in that province there were individuals very desirous of becoming children of Zebedee."[76] In 1602 and 1603.

Barneveld, on his part, although accustomed to speak in public of his Excellency Prince Maurice in terms of profoundest respect, did not fail to communicate in influential quarters his fears that the prince was inspired by excessive ambition, and that he desired to protract the war, not for the

[75] Wagenaar, ix. 283–285.

[76] Van der Kemp, iii. 100–103, 396–400, *i. e.* zealous disciples of their master, as Van der Kemp explains.

good of the commonwealth, but for the attainment of greater power in the state. The envoys of France, expressly instructed on that subject by the king, whose purposes would be frustrated if the ill-blood between these eminent personages could not be healed, did their best to bring about a better understanding, but with hardly more than an apparent success.

Once more there were stories flying about that the stadholder had called the Advocate liar, and that he had struck him or offered to strike him[77]—tales as void of truth, doubtless, as those so rife after the battle of Nieuport, but which indicated the exasperation which existed.

When the news of the rejection of the king's ratification reached Madrid, the indignation of the royal conscience-keepers was vehement.[78]

That the potentate of so large a portion of the universe should be treated by those lately his subjects with less respect than that due from equals to equals, seemed intolerable. So thoroughly inspired, however, was the king by the love of religion and the public good—as he informed Marquis Spinola by letter—and so intense was his desire for the termination of that disastrous war, that he did not hesitate indulgently to grant what had been so obstinately demanded. Little was to be expected, he said, from the stubbornness of the provinces, and from their extraordinary manner of transacting business, but looking, nevertheless, only to divine duty, and preferring its dictates to a selfish regard for his own interests, he had resolved to concede that liberty to the provinces which had been so importunately claimed. He however imposed the condition that the States should permit free and public exercise of the Catholic religion throughout their territories, and that so long as such worship was unobstructed, so long and no longer should the liberty now conceded to the provinces endure.[79]

"Thus did this excellent prince," says an eloquent Jesuit, "prefer obedience to the Church before subjection to himself,

[77] Wagenaar, ix. 285. [78] Gallucci, 338.
[79] The King to Spinola, *apud* Gallucci, *ubi sup.*

and insist that those, whom he emancipated from his own dominions, should still be loyal to the sovereignty of the Pope."[80]

Friar John, who had brought the last intelligence from the Netherlands, might have found it difficult, if consulted, to inform the king how many bills of exchange would be necessary to force this wonderful condition on the Government of the provinces. That the republic should accept that liberty as a boon which she had won with the red right hand, and should establish within her domains as many agents for Spanish reaction as there were Roman priests, monks, and Jesuits to be found, was not very probable. It was not thus nor then that the great lesson of religious equality and liberty for all men—the inevitable result of the Dutch revolt—was to be expounded. The insertion of such a condition in the preamble to a treaty with a foreign power would have been a desertion on the part of the Netherlands of the very principle of religious or civil freedom.

The monk, however, had convinced the Spanish Government that in six months after peace had been made the States would gladly accept the dominion of Spain once more, or, at the very least, would annex themselves to the obedient Netherlands under the sceptre of the archdukes.

Secondly, he assured the duke that they would publicly and totally renounce all connection with France.

Thirdly, he pledged himself that the exercise of the Catholic religion would be as free as that of any other creed.[81]

And the duke of Lerma believed it all: such and no greater was his capacity for understanding the course of events which he imagined himself to be directing. Certainly Friar John did not believe what he said.

"Master Monk is not quite so sure of his stick as he pretends to be," said Secretary-of-State Villeroy.[82] Of course, no one knew better the absurdity of those assurances than Master Monk himself.

[80] Gallucci, *ubi sup.* [81] Negotiations de Jeannin, i, 360.
[82] Ibid. Letter of 19th Sept. 1607.

"It may be that he has held such language," said Jeannin, "in order to accomplish his object in Spain. But 'tis all dreaming and moonshine, which one should laugh at rather than treat seriously. These people here mean to be sovereign for ever and will make no peace except on that condition. This grandeur and vanity have entered so deeply into their brains that they will be torn into little pieces rather than give it up."[83]

Spinola, as acute a politician as he was a brilliant commander, at once demonstrated to his Government the impotence of such senile attempts. No definite agreements could be made, he wrote, except by a general convention. Before a treaty of peace, no permission would be given by the States to the public exercise of the Catholic religion, for fear of giving offence to what were called the Protestant powers. Unless they saw the proper ratification they would enter into no negotiations at all. When the negotiations had produced a treaty, the Catholic worship might be demanded. Thus peace might be made, and the desired conditions secured, or all parties would remain as they had been.[84]

The Spanish Government replied by sending a double form of ratification.[85] It would not have been the Spanish Government, had one simple, straightforward document been sent. Plenty of letters came at the same time, triumphantly refuting the objections and arguments of the States-General. To sign "*Yo el Rey*" had been the custom of the king's ancestors in dealing with foreign powers. Thus had Philip II. signed the treaty of Vervins. Thus had the reigning king confirmed the treaty of Vervins. Thus had he signed the recent treaty with England as well as other conventions with other potentates. If the French envoys at the Hague said the contrary they erred from ignorance or from baser reasons. The provinces could not be declared free until Catholic worship was conceded. The donations must be mutual and simultaneous and the States would gain a much more stable and

[83] Negotiations de Jeannin, i. 394. Letter of 6th Oct. 1607.
[84] Gallucci, 338.
[85] Ibid. 340.

diuturnal liberty, founded not upon a simple declaration, but lawfully granted them as a compensation for a just and pious work performed. To this end the king sent ratification number one in which his sentiments were fully expressed. If, however, the provinces were resolved not to defer the declaration so ardently desired and to refuse all negotiation until they had received it, then ratification number two, therewith sent and drawn up in the required form, might be used. It was, however, to be exhibited but not delivered. The provinces would then see the clemency with which they were treated by the king, and all the world might know that it was not his fault if peace were not made.[86]

Thus the politicians of Madrid ; speaking in the name of their august sovereign and signing "*Yo el Rey*" for him without troubling him even to look at the documents.

When these letters arrived, the time fixed by the States for accepting the ratification had run out, and their patience was well-nigh exhausted. The archduke held council with Spinola, Verreyken, Richardot, and others, and it was agreed that ratification number two, in which the Catholic worship was not mentioned, should be forthwith sent to the States. Certainly no other conclusion could have been reached, and it was fortunate that a lucid interval in the deliberations of the lunati csat Madrid had furnished the archduke with an alternative. Had it been otherwise and had number one been presented, with all the accompanying illustrations, the same dismal comedy might have gone on indefinitely until the Dutchmen hissed it away and returned to their tragic business once more.

On the 25th October, Friar John and Verreyken came before the States-General, more than a hundred members being present, besides Prince Maurice and Count Lewis William.[87] 25 Oct. 1607.

The monk stated that he had faithfully represented to his Majesty at Madrid the sincere, straightforward, and undissembling proceedings of their lordships in these negotiations.[88]

[86] Gallucci, 340. [87] Wagenaar, ix. 285. [88] Jeannin, i. 423.

He had also explained the constitution of their Government and had succeeded in obtaining from his royal Majesty the desired ratification, after due deliberation with the council. This would now give the assurance of a firm and durable peace, continued Neyen, even if his Majesty should come one day to die—being mortal. Otherwise, there might be inconveniences to fear. Now, however, the document was complete in all its parts, so far as regarded what was principal and essential, and in conformity with the form transmitted by the States-General. "God the Omnipotent knows," proceeded the friar, "how sincere is my intention in this treaty of peace as a means of delivering the Netherlands from the miseries of war, as your lordships will perceive by the form of the agreement, explaining itself and making manifest its pure and undissembling intentions, promising nothing and engaging to nothing which will not be effectually performed. This would not be the case if his Majesty were proceeding by finesse or deception. The ratification might be nakedly produced as demanded, without any other explanation. But his Majesty, acting in good faith, has now declared his last determination in order to avoid anything that might be disputed at some future day, as your lordships will see more amply when the auditor has exhibited the document."[89]

When the friar had finished Verreyken spoke.

He reminded them of the proofs already given by the archdukes of their sincere desire to change the long and sanguinary war into a good and assured peace. Their lordships the States had seen how liberally, sincerely, and roundly their Highnesses had agreed to all demands and had procured the ratification of his Majesty, even although nothing had been proposed in that regard at the beginning of the negotiations.

He then produced the original document, together with two copies, one in French the other in Flemish, to be carefully collated by the States.[90]

"It is true," said the auditor, "that the original is not

[89] Jeannin, i. 422, 423.

[90] Ibid. 423, 424.

made out in Latin nor in French as your lordships demanded, but in Spanish, and in the same form and style as used by his Majesty in treating with all the kings, potentates, and republics of Christendom. To tell you the truth, it has seemed strange that there should be a wish to make so great and puissant a king change his style, such demand being contrary to all reason and equity, and more so as his Majesty is content with the style which your lordships have been pleased to adopt."

The ratification was then exhibited.

It set forth that Don Philip, by grace of God King of Castile, Leon, Arragon, the Two Sicilies, Portugal, Navarre, and of fourteen or fifteen other European realms duly enumerated; King of the Eastern and Western Indies and of the continents on terra firma adjacent, King of Jerusalem, Archduke of Antioch, Duke of Burgundy, and King of the Ocean, having seen that the archdukes were content to treat with the States-General of the United Provinces in quality of, and as holding them for, countries, provinces, and free states over which they pretended to no authority; either by way of a perpetual peace or for a truce or suspension of arms for twelve, fifteen, or twenty years, at the choice of the said States, and knowing that the said most serene archdukes had promised to deliver the king's ratification; had, after ripe deliberation with his council, and out of his certain wisdom and absolute royal power, made the present declarations, similar to the one made by the archdukes, for the accomplishment of the said promise so far as it concerned him:

"And we principally declare," continued the King of Spain, Jerusalem, America, India, and the Ocean, "that we are content that in our name, and on our part, shall be treated with the said States in the quality of, and as held by us for, free countries, provinces, and states, over which we make no pretensions. Thus we approve and ratify every point of the said agreement, promising on faith and word of a king to guard and accomplish it as entirely as if we had consented to it from the beginning."

"But we declare," said the king, in conclusion, "that if the treaty for a peace or a truce of many years, by which the pretensions of both parties are to be arranged—as well in the matter of religion as all the surplus—shall not be concluded, then this ratification shall be of no effect and as if it never had been made and, in virtue of it, we are not to lose a single point of our right, nor the United Provinces to acquire one, but things are to remain, so far as regards the rights of the two parties, exactly as they are at present; each to do what to each shall seem best."[91]

Such were the substantial parts of the document—with much superfluous verbiage lopped away—which had been signed "I the King" at Madrid on the 18th September, and the two copies of which were presented to the States-General on the 25th October, the commissioners retaining the original.

The papers were accepted, with a few general commonplaces by Barneveld meaning nothing, and an answer was promised after a brief delay.[92]

A committee of seven, headed by the Advocate as chairman and spokesman, held a conference with the ambassadors of France and England, at four o'clock in the afternoon of the same day and another at ten o'clock next morning.[93]

The States were not very well pleased with the ratification. What especially moved their discontent was the concluding clause, according to which it was intimated that if the pretensions of Spain in regard to religion were not fulfilled in the final treaty, the ratification was waste-paper and the king would continue to claim all his rights.

How much more loudly would they have vociferated, could they have looked into Friar John's wallet and have seen ratification number one! Then they would have learned that, after nearly a year of what was called negotiation, the king had still meant to demand the restoration of the Catholic worship before he would even begin to entertain the little fiction that the provinces were free.

[91] Jeannin, i. 425–429. [92] Ibid. 433. [93] Ibid. 432–438.

As to the signature, the paper, and the Spanish language, those were minor matters. Indeed, it is difficult to say why the King of Spain should not issue a formal document in Spanish. It is doubtful whether, had he taken a fancy to read it, he could have understood it in any other tongue. Moreover, Spanish would seem the natural language for Spanish state-papers. Had he, as King of Jerusalem, America, or India, chosen the Hebrew, Aztec, or Sanscrit, in his negotiations with the United Provinces, there might have been more cause for dissatisfaction.

Jeannin, who was of course the leading spirit among the foreign members of the conference, advised the acceptance of the ratification. Notwithstanding the technical objections to its form, he urged that in substance it was in sufficient conformity to the draught furnished by the States. Nothing could be worse, in his opinion, for the provinces than to remain any longer suspended between peace and war. They would do well, therefore, to enter upon negotiations so soon as they had agreed among themselves upon three points.

They must fix the great indispensable terms which they meant to hold, and from which no arguments would ever induce them to recede. Thus they would save valuable time and be spared much frivolous discourse.

Next, they ought to establish a good interior government.

Thirdly, they should at once arrange their alliances and treaties with foreign powers, in order to render the peace to be negotiated a durable one.[94]

As to the first and second of these points, the Netherlanders needed no prompter. They had long ago settled the conditions without which they would make no treaty at all, and certainly it was not the States-General that had thus far been frivolously consuming time.

As to the form of government, defective though it was, the leaders of the republic knew very well in whose interests such sly allusions to their domestic affairs were repeatedly ventured by the French envoys. In regard to treaties with

[94] Jeannin, i. 432–437.

foreign powers it was, of course, most desirable for the republic to obtain the formal alliance of France and England. Jeannin and his colleagues were ready to sign such a treaty, offensive and defensive, at once, but they found it impossible to induce the English ambassadors, with whom there was a conference on the 26th October, to come into any written engagement on the subject. They expressed approbation of the plan individually and in words, but deemed it best to avoid any protocol, by which their sovereign could be implicated in a promise. Should the negotiations for peace be broken off, it would be time enough to make a treaty to protect the provinces. Meantime, they ought to content themselves with the general assurance, already given them, that in case of war the monarchs of France and England would not abandon them, but would provide for their safety, either by succour or in some other way, so that they would be placed out of danger.[95]

Such promises were vague without being magnificent, and, as James had never yet lifted his finger to assist the provinces, while indulging them frequently with oracular advice, it could hardly be expected that either the French envoys or the States-General would reckon very confidently on assistance from Great Britain, should war be renewed with Spain.

On the whole, it was agreed to draw up a paper briefly stating the opinion of the French and English plenipotentiaries that the provinces would do well to accept the ratification.[96]

The committee of the States, with Barneveld as chairman, expressed acquiescence, but urged that they could not approve the clause in that document concerning religion. It looked as if the King of Spain wished to force them to consent by treaty that the Catholic religion should be re-established in their country. As they were free and sovereign, however, and so recognised by himself, it was not for him to meddle with such matters. They foresaw that this

[95] Jeannin, i. 434. [96] Ibid. 429.

clause would create difficulties when the whole matter should be referred to the separate provinces, and that it would, perhaps, cause the entire rejection of the ratification.

The envoys, through the voice of Jeannin, remonstrated against such a course. After all, the objectionable clause, it was urged, should be considered only as a demand which the king was competent to make and it was not reasonable, they said, for the States to shut his mouth and prevent him from proposing what he thought good to propose.

On the other hand, they were not obliged to acquiesce in the proposition. In truth, it would be more expedient that the States themselves should grant this grace to the Catholics, thus earning their gratitude, rather than that it should be inserted in the treaty.[97]

A day or two later there was an interview between the French envoys and Count Lewis William, for whose sage, dispassionate, and upright character they had all a great respect.[98] It was their object—in obedience to the repeated instructions of the French king—to make use of his great influence over Prince Maurice in favour of peace. It would be better, they urged, that the stadholder should act more in harmony with the States than he had done of late, and should reflect that, the ratification being good, there was really no means of preventing a peace, except in case the King of Spain should refuse the conditions necessary for securing it. The prince would have more power by joining with the States than in opposing them. Count Lewis expressed sympathy with these views, but feared that Maurice would prefer that the ratification should not be accepted until the states of the separate provinces had been heard ; feeling convinced that several of those bodies would reject that instrument on account of the clause relating to religion.

Jeannin replied that such a course would introduce great discord into the provinces, to the profit of the enemy, and that the King of France himself—so far from being likely to wish the ratification rejected because of the clause—would

[97] Jeannin, i. 435. [98] Ibid. 437.

never favour the rupture of negotiations if it came on account of religion. He had always instructed them to use their efforts to prevent any division among the States, as sure to lead to their ruin. He would certainly desire the same stipulation as the one made by the King of Spain, and would support rather than oppose the demand thus made, in order to content the Catholics. To be sure, he would prefer that the States should wisely make this provision of their own accord rather than on the requisition of Spain, but a rupture of the pending negotiations from the cause suggested would be painful to him and very damaging to his character at Rome.[99]

2nd Nov. On the 2nd November the States-General gave their formal answer to the commissioners, in regard to the ratification.

That instrument, they observed, not only did not agree with the form as promised by the archdukes in language and style, but also in regard to the seal, and to the insertion and omission of several words. On this account, and especially by reason of the concluding clause, there might be inferred the annulment of the solemn promise made in the body of the instrument. The said king and archdukes knew very well that these States-General of free countries and provinces, over which the king and archdukes pretended to no authority, were competent to maintain order in all things regarding the good constitution and government of their land and its inhabitants. On this subject, nothing could be pretented or proposed on the part of the king and archdukes without violation of formal and solemn promises.[100]

"Nevertheless," continued the States-General, "in order not to retard a good work, already begun, for the purpose of bringing the United Provinces out of a long and bloody war into a Christian and assured peace, the letters of ratification will be received in respect that they contain the declaration, on part of both the king and the archdukes, that they will treat for a peace or a truce of many years with the States-

[99] Jeannin, i. 432–437. [100] Ibid. V. d. Kemp, iii. 30. Wagenaar, ix. 287, 288.

General of the United Provinces, in quality of, and as holding them to be, free countries, provinces, and states, over which they make no pretensions." [101]

It was further intimated, however, that the ratification was only received for reference to the estates of each of the provinces, and it was promised that, within six weeks, the commissioners should be informed whether the provinces would consent or refuse to treat. It was moreover declared that, neither at that moment nor at any future time, could any point in the letters of ratification be accepted which, directly or indirectly, might be interpreted as against that essential declaration and promise in regard to the freedom of the provinces. In case the decision should be taken to enter into negotiation upon the basis of that ratification, or any other that might meantime arrive from Spain, then firm confidence was expressed by the States that, neither on the part of the king nor that of the archdukes would there be proposed or pretended, in contravention of that promise, any point touching the good constitution, welfare, state, or government of the United Provinces, and of the inhabitants. The hope was furthermore expressed that, within ten days after the reception of the consent of the States to treat, commissioners would be sent by the archdukes to the Hague, fully authorised and instructed to declare roundly their intentions, in order to make short work of the whole business. In that case, the States would duly authorize and instruct commissioners to act in their behalf.

Thus in the answer especial warning was given against any possible attempt to interfere with the religious question. The phraseology could not be mistaken.

At this stage of the proceedings, the States demanded that the original instrument of ratification should be deposited with them. The two commissioners declared that they were without power to consent to this. Hereupon the Assembly became violent, and many members denounced the refusal as equivalent to breaking off the negotiations. Everything

[101] Jeannin, i, 430.

indicated, so it was urged, a desire on the Spanish side to spin delays out of delays, and, meantime, to invent daily some new trap for deception. Such was the vehemence upon this point that the industrious Franciscan posted back to Brussels, and returned with the archduke's permission to deliver the document.[102] Three conditions, however, were laid down. The States must give a receipt for the ratification. They must say in that receipt that the archdukes, in obtaining the paper from Spain, had fulfilled their original promise. If peace should not be made, they were to return the document.

When these conditions were announced, the indignation of the republican Government at the trifling of their opponents was fiercer than ever. The discrepancies between the form prescribed and the ratification obtained had always been very difficult of digestion, but, although willing to pass them by, the States stoutly refused to accept the document on these conditions.

Tooth and nail[103] Verreyken and Neyen fought out the contest and were worsted. Once more the nimble friar sped back and forth between the Hague and his employer's palace, and at last, after tremendous discussions in cabinet council, the conditions were abandoned.

"Nobody can decide," says the Jesuit historian, "which was greater—the obstinacy of the federal Government in screwing out of the opposite party everything it deemed necessary, or the indulgence of the archdukes in making every possible concession."[104]

Had these solemn tricksters of an antiquated school perceived that, in dealing with men who meant what they said and said what they meant, all these little dilatory devices were superfluous, perhaps the wholesome result might have sooner been reached. In a contest of diplomacy against time it generally happens that time is the winner, and on this occasion, time and the republic were fighting on the same side.

[102] Gallucci, 342. [103] "Mordicus." Ibid. [104] Ibid.

On the 13th December the States-General re-assembled at the Hague, the separate provinces having in the interval given fresh instructions to their representatives. It was now decided that no treaty should be made, unless the freedom of the commonwealth was recognized in phraseology which, after consultation with the foreign ambassadors, should be deemed satisfactory. Farther it was agreed that, neither in ecclesiastical nor secular matters, should any conditions be accepted which could be detrimental to freedom. In case the enemy should strive for the contrary, the world would be convinced that he alone was responsible for the failure of the peace negotiations. Then, with the support of other powers friendly to the republic, hostilities could be resumed in such a manner as to ensure a favourable issue for an upright cause.

The armistice, begun on the 4th of May, was running to an end, and it was now renewed at the instance of the States. That Government, moreover, on the 23rd December formally notified to the archdukes that, trusting to their declarations, and to the statements of Neyen and Verreyken, it was willing to hold conferences for peace.[105] Their Highnesses were accordingly invited to appoint seven or eight commissioners at once, on the same terms as formally indicated.

The original understanding had been that no envoys but Netherlanders should come from Brussels for these negotiations.[106]

Barneveld and the peace party, however, were desirous that Spinola, who was known to be friendly to a pacific result, should be permitted to form part of the mission. Accordingly the letters, publicly drawn up in the Assembly, adhered to the original arrangement, but Barneveld, with the privity of other leading personages, although without the knowledge of Maurice, Lewis William, and the State-Council, secretly enclosed a little note in the principal despatch to Neyen and Verreyken.[107] In this billet it was intimated that, notwith-

[105] Resol Holl. 4 Dec. 1607. Wagenaar, ix. 290, 291.

[106] Wagenaar, ix. 247, 293.

[107] Resol. Holl. 4 Dec. Wagenaar, ix 293–295. Van der Kemp, iii. 31 134, 135.

standing the prohibition in regard to foreigners, the States were willing—it having been proposed that one or two who were not Netherlanders should be sent—that a single Spaniard, provided he were not one of the principal military commanders, should make part of the embassy.[108]

The phraseology had a double meaning. Spinola was certainly the chief military commander, but he was not a Spaniard. This eminent personage might be supposed to have thus received permission to come to the Netherlands, despite all that had been urged by the war-party against the danger incurred, in case of a renewal of hostilities, by admitting so clear-sighted an enemy into the heart of the republic. Moreover, the terms of the secret note would authorize the appointment of another foreigner—even a Spaniard—while the crafty president Richardot might creep into the commission, on the ground that, being a Burgundian, he might fairly call himself a Netherlander.

And all this happened.

Thus, after a whole year of parley, in which the States-General had held firmly to their original position, while the Spanish Government had crept up inch by inch, and through countless windings and subterfuges, to the point on which they might have all stood together at first, and thus have saved a twelvemonth, it was finally settled that peace conferences should begin.

Barneveld had carried the day. Maurice and his cousin Lewis William had uniformly, deliberately, but not factiously, used all their influence against any negotiations. The prince had all along loudly expressed his conviction that neither the archdukes nor Spain would ever be brought to an honourable peace. The most to be expected of them was a truce of twelve or fifteen years, to which his consent at least should never be given, and during which cessation of hostilities, should it be accorded, every imaginable effort would be made to regain by intrigue what the king had lost by the sword.[109] As for the King of England and his counsellors, Maurice

[108] Authorities last cited.

[109] Van der Kemp, iii. 16.

always denounced them as more Spanish than Spaniards, as doing their best to put themselves on the most intimate terms with his Catholic Majesty, and as secretly desirous—insane policy as it seemed—of forcing the Netherlands back again under the sceptre of that monarch.

He had at first been supported in his position by the French ambassadors, who had felt or affected disinclination for peace, but who had subsequently thrown the whole of their own and their master's influence on the side of Barneveld. They had done their best—and from time to time they had been successful—to effect at least a superficial reconciliation between those two influential personages. They had employed all the arguments at their disposal to bring the prince over to the peace party. Especially they had made use of the *argumentum ad crumenam*, which that veteran broker in politics, Jeannin, had found so effective in times past with the great lords of the League. But Maurice showed himself so proof against the golden inducements suggested by the President that he and his king both arrived at the conclusion that there were secret motives at work, and that Maurice was not dazzled by the brilliant prospects held out to him by Henry, only because his eyes were stedfastly fixed upon some unknown but splendid advantage, to be gained through other combinations. It was naturally difficult for Henry to imagine the possibility of a man, playing a first part in the world's theatre, being influenced by so weak a motive as conviction.

Lewis William too—that "grave and wise young man," as Lord Leicester used to call him twenty years before—remained steadily on the side of the prince. Both in private conversation and in long speeches to the States-General, he maintained that the Spanish court was incapable of sincere negotiations with the commonwealth, that to break faith with heretics and rebels would always prove the foundation of its whole policy, and that to deceive them by pretences of a truce or a treaty, and to triumph afterwards over the results of its fraud, was to be expected as a matter of course.

Sooner would the face of nature be changed than the cardinal maxim of Catholic statesmanship be abandoned.[110]

But the influence of the Nassaus, of the province of Zeeland, of the clergy, and of the war-party in general, had been overbalanced by Barneveld and the city corporations, aided by the strenuous exertions of the French ambassadors.

The decision of the States-General was received with sincere joy at Brussels. The archdukes had something to hope from peace, and little but disaster and ruin to themselves from a continuance of the war. Spinola too was unaffectedly in favour of negotiations. He took the ground that the foreign enemies of Spain, as well as her pretended friends, agreed in wishing her to go on with the war, and that this ought to open her eyes as to the expediency of peace. While there was a general satisfaction in Europe that the steady exhaustion of her strength in this eternal contest made her daily less and less formidable to other nations, there were on the other hand puerile complaints at court that the conditions prescribed by impious and insolent rebels to their sovereign were derogatory to the dignity of monarchy.[111] The spectacle of Spain sending ambassadors to the Hague to treat for peace, on the basis of Netherland independence, would be a humiliation such as had never been exhibited before. That the haughty confederation should be allowed thus to accomplish its ends, to trample down all resistance to its dictation, and to defy the whole world by its insults to the Church and to the sacred principle of monarchy, was most galling to Spanish pride. Spinola, as a son of Italy, and not inspired by the fervent hatred to Protestantism which was indigenous to the other peninsula, steadily resisted those arguments. None knew better than he the sternness of the stuff out of which that republic was made, and he felt that now or never was the time to treat, even as, five years before, *jam aut nunquam* had been inscribed on his banner outside Ostend. But he protested that his friends gave him even

[110] See especially Resol Stat.-Gen. 30 Oct 1607, in Van der Kemp, iii. 126–130.

[111] Spinola's letters, *apud* Gallucci, 347, *seqq.* Bentivoglio.

harder work than his enemies had ever done, and he stoutly maintained that a peace against which all the rivals of Spain seemed to have conspired from fear of seeing her tranquil and disembarrassed, must be advantageous to Spain. The genial and quick-witted Genoese could not see and hear all the secret letters and private conversations of Henry and James and their ambassadors, and he may be pardoned for supposing that, notwithstanding all the crooked and incomprehensible politics of Greenwich and Paris, the serious object of both England and France was to prolong the war. In his most private correspondence he expressed great doubts as to a favourable issue to the pending conferences, but avowed his determination that if they should fail it would be from no want of earnest effort on his part to make them succeed. It should never be said that he preferred his own private advantage to the duty of serving the best interests of the crown.[112]

Meantime the India trade, which was to form the great bone of contention in the impending conferences, had not been practically neglected of late by the enterprising Hollanders. Peter Verhoeff, fresh from the victory of Gibraltar, towards which he had personally so much contributed by the splendid manner in which he had handled the Æolus after the death of Admiral Heemskerk, was placed in command of a fleet to the East Indies, which was to sail early in the spring.[113]

Admiral Matelieff, who had been cruising in those seas during the three years past, was now on his way home. His exploits had been worthy the growing fame of the republican navy. In the summer of 1606 he had laid siege to the town and fortress of Malacca, constructed by the Portuguese at the southmost extremity of the Malay peninsula. Andreas Hurtado de Mendoza commanded the position, with a force of three thousand men, among whom were many Indians. The King or Sultan of Johore, at the south-eastern extremity of the peninsula, remained faithful to his Dutch

1606.

[112] Gallucci, 349, 350.

[113] Wagenaar, ix. 301.

allies, and accepted the proposition of Matelieff to take part in the hostilities now begun. The admiral's fleet consisted of eleven small ships, with fourteen hundred men. It was not exactly a military expedition. To the sailors of each ship were assigned certain shares of the general profits, and as it was obvious that more money was likely to be gained by trade with the natives, or by the capture of such stray carracks and other merchantmen of the enemy as were frequently to be met in these regions, the men were not particularly eager to take part in sieges of towns or battles with cruisers. Matelieff, however, had sufficient influence over his comrades to inflame their zeal on this occasion for the fame of the republic, and to induce them to give the Indian princes and the native soldiery a lesson in Batavian warfare.

A landing was effected on the peninsula, the sailors and guns were disembarked, and an imposing auxiliary force, sent, according to promise, after much delay, by the Sultan of Johore, proceeded to invest Malacca. The ground proved wet, swampy, and impracticable for trenches, galleries, covered ways, and all the other machinery of a regular siege. Matelieff was not a soldier nor a naval commander by profession, but a merchant-skipper, like so many other heroes whose achievements were to be the permanent glory of their fatherland. He would not, however, have been a Netherlander had he not learned something of the science which Prince Maurice had so long been teaching, not only to his own countrymen but to the whole world. So moveable turrets, constructed of the spice-trees which grew in rank luxuriance all around, were filled with earth and stones, and advanced towards the fort. Had the natives been as docile to learn as the Hollanders were eager to teach a few easy lessons in the military art, the doom of Andreas Hurtado de Mendoza would have been sealed. But the great truths which those youthful pedants, Maurice and Lewis William, had extracted twenty years before from the works of the Emperor Leo and earlier pagans, amid the jeers of veterans, were not easy to transplant to the Malayan peninsula.

It soon proved that those white-turbaned, loose-garmented, supple-jointed, highly-picturesque troops of the sultan were not likely to distinguish themselves for anything but wonderful rapidity in retreat. Not only did they shrink from any advance towards the distant forts, but they were incapable of abiding an attack within or behind their towers, and, at every random shot from the enemy's works, they threw down their arms and fled from their stations in dismay. It was obvious enough that the conquest and subjugation of such feeble warriors by the Portuguese and Spaniards were hardly to be considered brilliant national trophies. They had fallen an easy prey to the first European invader. They had no discipline, no obedience, no courage; and Matelieff soon found that to attempt a scientific siege with such auxiliaries against a well-constructed stone fortress, garrisoned with three thousand troops, under an experienced Spanish soldier, was but midsummer madness.

Fevers and horrible malaria, bred by the blazing sun of the equator out of those pestilential jungles, poisoned the atmosphere. His handful of troops, amounting to not much more than a hundred men to each of his ships, might melt away before his eyes. Nevertheless, although it was impossible for him to carry the place by regular approach, he would not abandon the hope of reducing it by famine. During four months long, accordingly, he kept every avenue by land or sea securely invested. In August, however, the Spanish viceroy of India, Don Alphonso de Castro, made his appearance on the scene. Coming from Goa with a splendid fleet, numbering fourteen great galleons, four galleys, and sixteen smaller vessels, manned by three thousand seven hundred Portuguese and other Europeans, and an equal number of native troops, he had at first directed his course towards Atchen, on the north-west point of Sumatra. Here, with the magnificent arrogance which Spanish and Portuguese viceroys were accustomed to manifest towards the natives of either India, he summoned the king to surrender his strongholds, to assist in constructing a fortress for the use of his conquerors, to deliver

up all the Netherlanders within his domains, and to pay the expenses of the expedition which had thus been sent to chastise him. But the King of Atchen had not sent ambassadors into the camp of Prince Maurice before the city of Grave in vain. He had learned that there were other white skins besides the Spaniards at the antipodes, and that the republic whose achievements in arts and arms were conspicuous trophies of Western civilization, was not, as it had been represented to him, a mere nest of pirates. He had learned to prefer an alliance with Holland to slavery under Spain. Moreover, he had Dutch engineers and architects in his service, and a well-constructed system of Dutch fortifications around his capital. To the summons to surrender himself and his allies he returned a defiant answer. The viceroy ordered an attack upon the city. One fort was taken. From before the next he was repulsed with great loss. The Sumatrans had derived more profit from intercourse with Europeans than the inhabitants of Johore or the Moluccas had done. De Castro abandoned the siege. He had received intelligence of the dangerous situation of Malacca, and moved down upon the place with his whole fleet. Admiral Matelieff, apprised by scouts of his approach, behaved with the readiness and coolness of a veteran campaigner. Before De Castro could arrive in the roadstead of Malacca, he had withdrawn all his troops from their positions, got all his artillery reshipped, and was standing out in the straits, awaiting the enemy.

On the 17th August, the two fleets, so vastly disproportionate in number, size, equipment, and military force—eighteen galleons and galleys, with four or five thousand fighting men, against eleven small vessels and twelve or fourteen hundred sailors—met in that narrow sea. The action lasted all day. It was neither spirited nor sanguinary. It ought to have been within the power of the Spaniard to crush his diminutive adversary. It might have seemed a sufficient triumph for Matelieff to manœuvre himself out of harm's way. No vessel on either side was boarded,

17 Aug. 1606.

not one surrendered, but two on each side were set on fire and destroyed. Eight of the Dutchmen were killed—not a very sanguinary result after a day's encounter with so imposing an armada. De Castro's losses were much greater, but still the battle was an insignificant one, and neither fleet gained a victory. Night put an end to the cannonading, and the Spaniards withdrew to Malacca, while Matelieff bore away to Johore. The siege of Malacca was relieved, and the Netherlanders now occupied themselves with the defence of the feeble sovereign at the other point of the peninsula.

Matelieff lay at Johore a month, repairing damages and laying in supplies. While still at the place, he received information that a large part of the Spanish armada had sailed from Malacca. Several of his own crew, who had lost their shares in the adventure by the burning of the ships to which they belonged in the action of 17th August, were reluctant and almost mutinous when their admiral now proposed to them a sudden assault on the portion of the Spanish fleet still remaining within reach. They had not come forth for barren glory, many protested, but in search of fortune; they were not elated by the meagre result of the expedition. Matelieff succeeded, however, at last in inspiring all the men of his command with an enthusiasm superior to sordid appeals, and made a few malcontents. On the 21st September, he sailed to Malacca, and late in the afternoon again attacked the Spaniards. Their fleet consisted of seven great galleons and three galleys lying in a circle before the town. The outermost ship, called the St. Nicholas, was boarded by men from three of the Dutch galleots with sudden and irresistible fury. There was a brief but most terrible action, the Netherlanders seeming endowed with superhuman vigour. So great was the panic that there was hardly an effort at defence, and within less than an hour nearly every Spaniard on board the St. Nicholas had been put to the sword. The rest of the armada engaged the Dutch fleet with spirit, but one of the great galleons was soon set on fire and burned to the water's edge. Another, dismasted and crippled, struck her flag, and all that

remained would probably have been surrendered or destroyed had not the sudden darkness of a tropical nightfall put an end to the combat at set of sun. Next morning another galleon, in a shattered and sinking condition, was taken possession of and found filled with dead and dying. The rest of the Spanish ships made their escape into the harbour of Malacca. Matelieff stood off and on in the straits for a day or two, hesitating for fear of shallows to follow into the roadstead. Before he could take a decision, he had the satisfaction of seeing the enemy, panic-struck, save him any further trouble. Not waiting for another attack, the Spaniards set fire to every one of their ships, and retired into their fortress, while Matelieff and his men enjoyed the great conflagration as idle spectators. Thus the enterprising Dutch admiral had destroyed ten great war-ships of the enemy, and, strange to relate, had scarcely lost one man of his whole squadron. Rarely had a more complete triumph been achieved on the water than in this battle in the straits of Malacca. Matelieff had gained much glory but very little booty. He was also encumbered with a great number of prisoners. These he sent to Don Alphonso, exchanging them for a very few Netherlanders then in Spanish hands, at the rate of two hundred Spaniards for ten Dutchmen —thus showing that he held either the enemy very cheap, or his own countrymen very dear. The captured ships he burned as useless to him, but retained twenty-four pieces of artillery.

It was known to Matelieff that the Spanish viceroy had received instructions to inflict chastisement on all the oriental potentates and their subjects who had presumed of late to trade and to form alliances with the Netherlanders. Johore, Achem, Paham, Patane, Amboyna, and Bantam, were the most probable points of attack. Johore had now been effectually defended, Achem had protected itself. The Dutch fleet proceeded at first to Bantam for refreshment, and from this point Matelieff sent three of his ships back to Holland. With the six remaining to him, he sailed for the Moluccas, having heard of various changes which had taken place in that

important archipelago. Pausing at the great emporium of nutmegs and all-spice, Amboyna, he took measures for strengthening the fortifications of the place, which was well governed by Frederick Houtman, and then proceeded to Ternate and Tidor.

During the absence of the Netherlanders, after the events on those islands recorded in a previous chapter, the Spaniards had swept down upon them from the Philippines with a fleet of thirty-seven ships, and had taken captive the Sultan of Ternate; while the potentate of Tidor, who had been left by Stephen van der Hagen in possession of his territories on condition of fidelity to the Dutch, was easily induced to throw aside the mask, and to renew his servitude to Spain. Thus both the coveted clove-islands had relapsed into the control of the enemy. Matelieff found it dangerous, on account of quicksands and shallows, to land on Tydore, but he took very energetic measures to recover possession of Ternate. On the southern side of the island, the Spaniards had built a fort and a town. The Dutch admiral disembarked upon the northern side, and, with assistance of the natives, succeeded in throwing up substantial fortifications at a village called Malaya. The son of the former sultan, who was a Spanish prisoner at the Philippines, was now formally inducted into his father's sovereignty, and Matelieff established at Malaya for his protection a garrison of forty-five Hollanders and a navy of four small yachts. Such were the slender means with which Oriental empires were founded in those days by the stout-hearted adventurers of the little Batavian republic.

With this miniature army and navy, and by means of his alliance with the distant commonwealth, of whose power this handful of men was a symbol, the King of Ternate was thenceforth to hold his own against the rival potentate on the other island, supported by the Spanish king. The same convention of commerce and amity was made with the Ternatians as the one which Stephen van der Hagen had formerly concluded with the Bandians, and it was agreed that

the potentate should be included in any treaty of peace that might be made between the republic and Spain.

Matelieff, with three ships and a cutter, now sailed for China, but lost his time in endeavouring to open trade with the Celestial empire. The dilatory mandarins drove him at last out of all patience, and, on turning his prows once more southward, he had nearly brought his long expedition to a disastrous termination. Six well-armed, well-equipped Portuguese galleons sailed out of Macao to assail him. It was not Matelieff's instinct to turn his back on a foe, however formidable, but on this occasion discretion conquered instinct. His three ships were out of repair; he had a deficiency of powder; he was in every respect unprepared for a combat; and he reflected upon the unfavourable impression which would be made on the Chinese mind should the Hollanders, upon their first appearance in the flowery regions, be vanquished by the Portuguese. He avoided an encounter, therefore, and, by skilful seamanship, eluded all attempts of the foe at pursuit. Returning to Ternate, he had the satisfaction to find that during his absence the doughty little garrison of Malaya had triumphantly defeated the Spaniards in an assault on the fortifications of the little town. On the other hand, the King of Johore, panic-struck on the departure of his Dutch protectors, had burned his own capital, and had betaken himself with all his court into the jungle.

Commending the one and rebuking the other potentate, the admiral provided assistance for both, some Dutch trading-vessels having meantime arrived in the archipelago. Matelieff now set sail for Holland, taking with him some ambassadors from the King of Siam and five ships well laden with spice. On his return he read a report of his adventures to the States-General, and received the warm commendations of their High Mightinesses.[114] Before his departure from the tropics, Paul van Kaarden, with eight war-ships, had reached Ban-

[114] The authorities for Matelieff's voyages are Grotius, xvii. 792-800; Meteren, 562, 563; and especially the original journals and records in "Begin und Vortgang."

tam. On his arrival in Holland the fleet of Peter ver Hoef was busily fitting out for another great expedition to the East.[115] This was the nation which Spanish courtiers thought to exclude for ever from commerce with India and America, because the Pope a century before had divided half the globe between Ferdinand the Catholic and Emmanuel the Fortunate.

It may be supposed that the results of Matelieff's voyage were likely to influence the pending negotiations for peace.

[115] Authorities last cited.

CHAPTER L.

Movements of the Emperor Rudolph — Marquis Spinola's reception at the Hague — Meeting of Spinola and Prince Maurice — Treaty of the Republic with the French Government — The Spanish commissioners before the States-General — Beginning of negotiations — Stormy discussions — Real object of Spain in the negotiations — Question of the India trade — Abandonment of the peace project — Negotiations for a truce — Prolongation of the armistice — Further delays — Treaty of the States with England — Proposals of the Spanish ambassadors to Henry of France and to James of England — Friar Neyen at the court of Spain — Spanish procrastination — Decision of Philip on the conditions of peace — Further conference at the Hague — Answer of the States-General to the proposals of the Spanish Government — General rupture.

TOWARDS the close of the year 1607 a very feeble demonstration was made in the direction of the Dutch republic by the very feeble Emperor of Germany. Rudolph, awaking as it might be from a trance, or descending for a moment from his star-gazing tower and his astrological pursuits to observe the movements of political spheres, suddenly discovered that the Netherlands were no longer revolving in their preordained orbit. Those provinces had been supposed to form part of one great system, deriving light and heat from the central imperial sun. It was time therefore to put an end to these perturbations. The emperor accordingly, as if he had not enough on his hands at that precise moment with the Hungarians, Transylvanians, Bohemian protestants, his brother Matthias and the Grand Turk, addressed a letter to the States of Holland, Zeeland, and the provinces confederated with them.[1]

Reminding them of the care ever taken by himself and his father to hear all their petitions, and to obtain for them a good peace, he observed that he had just heard of their con-

[1] Meteren, 553, *et seq.* Wagenaar, ix. 295-299. Grotius, xvi. 751, 752.

templated negotiations with King Philip and Archduke Albert, and of their desire to be declared free states and peoples. He was amazed, he said, that they should not have given him notice of so important an affair, inasmuch as all the United Provinces belonged to and were fiefs of the holy Roman Empire. They were warned, therefore, to undertake nothing that might be opposed to the feudal law except with his full knowledge. This letter was dated the 9th of October. The States took time to deliberate, and returned no answer until after the new year.[2] 9 Oct. 1607.

On the 2nd of January, 1608, they informed the emperor that they could never have guessed of his requiring notification as to the approaching conferences. They had not imagined that the archduke would keep them a secret from his brother, or the king from his uncle-cousin. Otherwise, the States would have sent due notice to his Majesty. They well remembered, they said, the appeals made by the provinces to the emperor from time to time, at the imperial diets, for help against the tyranny of the Spaniards. They well remembered, too, that no help was ever given them in response to those appeals. They had not forgotten either the famous Cologne negotiations for peace in presence of the imperial envoys, in consequence of which the enemy had carried on war against them with greater ferocity than before. At that epoch they had made use of an extreme remedy for an intolerable evil, and had solemnly renounced allegiance to the king. Since that epoch a whole generation of mankind had passed away, and many kings and potentates had recognised their freedom, obtained for just cause and maintained by the armed hand. After a long and bloody war, Albert and Philip had at last been brought to acknowledge the provinces as free countries over which they pretended to no right, as might be seen by the letters of both, copies of which were forwarded to the emperor. Full confidence was now expressed, therefore, that the emperor and all Germany would look with favour on such a God-fearing trans- 1608.

[2] Authorities last cited.

action, by which an end would be put to so terrible a war.[3] Thus the States-General; replying with gentle scorn to the antiquated claim of sovereignty on the part of imperial majesty. Duly authenticated by citations of investitures, indulgences, and concordates, engrossed on yellowest parchment, sealed with reddest sealing-wax, and reposing in a thousand pigeon-holes in mustiest archives, no claim could be more solemn or stately. Unfortunately, however, rebel pikes and matchlocks, during the past forty years, had made too many rents in those sacred parchments to leave much hope of their ever being pieced handsomely together again. As to the historical theory of imperial enfeoffment, the States thought it more delicate to glide smoothly and silently over the whole matter. It would have been base to acknowledge and impolite to refute the claim.[4]

It is as well to imitate this reserve. It is enough simply to remind the reader that although so late as the time of Charles V., the provinces had been declared constituent parts of the empire, liable to its burthens, and entitled to its protection; the Netherlanders being practical people, and deeming burthens and protection correlative, had declined the burthen because always deprived of the protection.

And now, after a year spent in clearing away the mountains of dust which impeded the pathway to peace, and which one honest vigorous human breath might at once have blown into space, the envoys of the archduke set forth towards the Hague.

Marquis Spinola, Don Juan de Mancicidor, private secretary to the King of Spain, President Richardot, Auditor Verreyken, and Brother John Neyen—a Genoese, a Spaniard, a Burgundian, a Fleming, and a Franciscan friar—travelling in great state, with a long train of carriages, horses, lackeys, cooks, and secretaries, by way of Breda, Bergen-op-Zoom,

31 Jan. 1608. Dort, Rotterdam, and Delft, and being received in each town and village through which they passed

[3] Meteren, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.*

[4] "De feudo silebatur quia et refelere odiosum et fateri inglorium."—Grotius, xvi. 752.

with great demonstrations of respect and cordial welcome, arrived at last within a mile of the Hague.[5]

It was the dead of winter, and of the severest winter that had occurred for many years. Every river, estuary, canal was frozen hard. All Holland was one broad level sheet of ice, over which the journey had been made in sledges. On the last day of January Prince Maurice, accompanied by Lewis William, and by eight state coaches filled with distinguished personages, left the Hague and halted at the Hoorn bridge, about midway between Ryswyk and the capital. The prince had replied to the first request of the States that he should go forward to meet Spinola, by saying that he would do so willingly if it were to give him battle; otherwise not. Olden-Barneveld urged upon him however that, as servant of the republic, he was bound to do what the States commanded, as a matter involving the dignity of the nation. In consequence of this remonstrance Maurice consented to go, but he went unwillingly.[6] The advancing procession of the Spanish ambassadors was already in sight. Far and wide in whatever direction the eye could sweep, the white surface of the landscape was blackened with human beings. It seemed as if the whole population of the Netherlands had assembled, in mass meeting, to witness the pacific interview between those two great chieftains who had never before stood face to face except upon the battle-field.

In carriages, in donkey carts, upon horseback, in sledges, on skates, upon foot—men, women, and children, gentle and simple, Protestants, Catholics, Gomarites, Arminians, anabaptists, country squires in buff and bandaleer, city magistrates and merchants in furs and velvet, artisans, boatmen, and peasants, with their wives and daughters in well-starched ruff and tremendous head-gear—they came thronging in countless multitudes, those honest Hollanders, cheering and throwing up their caps in honour of the chieftain whose military genius had caused so much disaster to their country. This uproarious demonstration of welcome on the part of the

[5] Meteren, 563.

[6] Letter of Aerssens, in Deventer, iii. 168.

multitude moved the spleen of many who were old enough to remember the horrors of Spanish warfare within their borders. "Thus unreflecting, gaping, boorish, are nearly all the common people of these provinces,"[7] said a contemporary, describing the scene, and forgetting that both high and low, according to his own account, made up the mass of spectators on that winter's day. Moreover it seems difficult to understand why the Hollanders should not have indulged a legitimate curiosity, and made a holiday on this memorable occasion. Spinola was not entering their capital in triumph, a Spanish army was not marching—as it might have done had the course of events been different—over the protective rivers and marshes of the fatherland, now changed by the exceptional cold into solid highways for invasion. On the contrary, the arrival of the great enemy within their gates, with the olive-branch instead of the sword in his hand, was a victory not for Spain but for the republic. It was known throughout the land that he was commissioned by the king and the archdukes to treat for peace with the States-General of the United Provinces as with the representatives of a free and independent nation, utterly beyond any foreign control.

Was not this opening of a cheerful and pacific prospect, after a half century's fight for liberty, a fair cause for rejoicing?

The Spanish commissioners arrived at the Hoorn bridge, Spinola alighted from his coach, Prince Maurice stepped forward into the road to greet him. Then the two eminent soldiers, whose names had of late been so familiar in the mouths of men, shook hands and embraced with heroic cordiality, while a mighty shout went up from the multitude around. It was a stately and dramatic spectacle, that peaceful meeting of the rival leaders in a war which had begun before either of them was born. The bystanders observed, or thought that they observed, signs of great emotion on the faces of both. It has also been recorded that

[7] Meteren, 563.

each addressed the other in epigrammatic sentences of compliment. "God is my witness," Maurice was supposed to have said, "that the arrival of these honourable negotiators is most grateful to me. Time, whose daughter is truth, will show the faith to be given to my words."[8]

"This fortunate day," replied Spinola, "has filled full the measure of my hopes and wishes, and taken from me the faculty of ever wishing for anything again. I trust in divine clemency that an opportunity may be given to show my gratitude, and to make a fit return for the humanity thus shown me by the most excellent prince that the sun shines upon."[9]

With this both got into the stadholder's carriage, Spinola being placed on Maurice's right hand. Their conversation during their brief drive to the capital, followed by their long retinue, and by the enthusiastic and vociferating crowd, has not been chronicled. It is also highly probable that the second-rate theatrical dialogue which the Jesuit historian, writing from Spinola's private papers, has preserved for posterity, was rather what seemed to his imagination appropriate for the occasion than a faithful shorthand report of anything really uttered. A few commonplace phrases of welcome, with a remark or two perhaps on the unexampled severity of the frost, seem more likely to have formed the substance of that brief conversation.

A couple of trumpeters of Spinola went braying through the streets of the village capital, heralding their master's approach with superfluous noise, and exciting the disgust of the quieter portion of the burghers.[10] At last however the envoys and their train were all comfortably housed. The Marquis, President Richardot, and Secretary Mancicidor, were established at a new mansion on the Vyverberg, belonging to Goswyn Menskens. The rest of the legation were lodged at the house of Wassenaer.[11]

It soon became plain that the ways of life and the style of

[8] Gallucci, 352.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Meteren, *ubi sup.*
[11] Ibid.

housekeeping habitual to great officers of the Spanish crown were very different from the thrifty manners and customs of Dutch republicans. It was so long since anything like royal pomp and circumstance had been seen in their borders that the exhibition, now made, excited astonishment. It was a land where every child went to school, where almost every individual inhabitant could read and write, where even the middle classes were proficients in mathematics and the classics, and could speak two or more modern languages; where the whole nation, with but few exceptions, were producers of material or intellectual wealth, and where comparatively little of unproductive consumption prevailed. Those self-governing and self-sustaining municipalities had almost forgotten the existence of the magnificent nothings so dear to the hearts of kings.

Spinola's house was open day and night. The gorgeous plate, gigantic candelabra, mighty ewers, shields and lavers of silver and gold, which decorated his tables and sideboards, amazed the gaping crowd. He dined and supped in state every day, and the public were admitted to gaze upon his banquets as if he had been a monarch. It seemed, said those homely republicans, as if "a silver christening were going on every day in his house."[12]

There were even grave remonstrances made to the magistracy and to the States-General against the effect of such ostentatious and immoral proceedings upon the popular mind, and suggestions that at least the doors should be shut, so that the scandal might be confined to Spinola's own household. But the republican authorities deciding, not without wisdom, that the spectacle ought to serve rather as a wholesome warning than as a contaminating example, declined any inquisitorial interference with the housekeeping of the Spanish ambassadors.[13]

Before the negotiations began, a treaty had been made between the republic and the French Government, by which it was stipulated that every effort should be made by both

[12] Meteren, 564 [13] Ibid.

contracting parties to bring about an honourable and assured peace between the United Provinces, Spain, and the archdukes. In case of the continuance of the war, however, it was agreed that France should assist the States with ten thousand men, while in case at any time, during the continuance of the league, France should be attacked by a foreign enemy, she should receive from her ally five thousand auxiliary troops, or their equivalent in maritime assistance. This convention was thought by other powers to be so profitable to the Netherlands as to excite general uneasiness and suspicion.

The States would have gladly signed a similar agreement with England, but nothing was to be done with that Government until an old-standing dispute in regard to the cloth trade had been arranged. Middelburg had the exclusive right of deposit for the cloths imported from England. This monopoly for Zeeland being naturally not very palatable to Amsterdam and other cities of Holland, the States-General had at last authorized the merchant-adventurers engaged in this traffic to deposit their goods in any city of the United Provinces.[14] The course of trade had been to import the raw cloth from England, to dress and dye it in the Netherlands, and then to re-export it to England. Latterly, however, some dyers and clothiers emigrating from the provinces to that country, had obtained a monopoly from James for practising their art in his dominions. In consequence of this arrangement the exportation of undyed cloths had been forbidden. This prohibition had caused irritation both in the kingdom and the republic, had necessarily deranged the natural course of trade and manufacture, and had now prevented for the time any conclusion of an alliance offensive and defensive between the countries, even if political sentiment had made such a league possible. The States-General had recourse to the usual expedient by which bad legislation on one side was counterveiled by equally bad legislation on the other The exportation of undyed English cloths being

[14] Wagenaar, ix. 317, 318.

forbidden by England, the importation of dyed English cloths was now prohibited by the Netherlands. The international cloth trade stopped. This embargo became at last so detestable to all parties that concession was made by the crown for a limited export of raw cloths. The concession was soon widened by custom into a general exportation, the royal Government looking through its fingers at the open infraction of its own laws, while the natural laws of trade before long re-established the old equilibrium. Meantime the ill-feeling produced by this dissension delayed any cordial political arrangement between the countries.

On the 5th of February the Spanish commissioners came for the first time before the States-General, assembled to the number of a hundred and thirty, in their palace at the Hague.[15]

The first meeting was merely one of mutual compliment, President Richardot, on behalf of his colleagues, expressing gratitude for the cordial welcome which had been manifested to the envoys on their journey through so many towns of the United Provinces. They had been received, he said, not as enemies with whom an almost perpetual war had been waged, but as friends, confederates, and allies. A warmer reception they could never have hoped for nor desired.

Two special commissioners were now appointed by the States-General to negotiate with the envoys. These were Count Lewis William and Brederode. With these delegates at large were associated seven others, one from each province. Barneveld of course represented Holland; Maldere, Zeeland; Berk, Utrecht; Hillama, Friesland; Sloat, Overyssel; Koender van Helpen, Groningen; Cornelius van Gend, Gelderland.[16]

The negotiations began at once. The archdukes had empowered the five envoys to deal in their name and in that of the King of Spain. Philip had authorized the archdukes to take this course by an instrument dated 10th January.

[15] Van der Kemp, iii 137, *et seq.* Meteren, 564, 565.
[16] Wagenaar, 322, ix 323. Gallucci, 352–355.

In this paper he called the archdukes hereditary sovereigns of the Netherlands.

It was agreed that the various points of negotiation should be taken up in regular order; but the first question of all that presented itself was whether the conferences should be for a truce or a peace.[17]

The secret object of Spain was for a truce of years. Thus she thought to save her dignity, to reserve her rights of re-conquest, to replenish her treasury, and to repair her military strength. Barneveld and his party, comprising a large majority of the States-General, were for peace. Prince Maurice, having done his utmost to oppose negotiations for peace, was, for still stronger reasons, determined to avoid falling into what he considered the ambush of a truce. The French ambassadors were also for peace. The Spanish envoys accordingly concealed their real designs, and all parties began discussions for the purpose of establishing a permanent peace.

This preliminary being settled, Barneveld asked the Spaniards if they had full powers to treat with the States as with a free nation, and if they recognised them as such.

"The most ample power," was the reply; "and we are content to treat with you even if you should choose to call yourself a kingdom."

"By what right then are the archdukes called by the king hereditary sovereigns of the Netherlands, and why do they append the seals of the seven United Provinces to this document?" asked the Advocate, taking up from the table the full power of Albert and Isabella and putting his finger on the seals.[18]

"By the same right," replied President Richardot, "that the King of France calls himself King of Navarre, that the

[17] Ibid. Meteren, 564, 565.

[18] Negotiations de Jeannin, i. 538, 539. Gallucci, Meteren, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* Compare also, for the whole course of these ratifications, the Minutes of Olden-Barneveld during the conferences, now first published in the invaluable and admirably-edited collection of Van Deventer. "Verhaal der Onderhandelingen te 's Hage tusschen de Nederlandsche en Spaansche gevolmagtigden," &c., 1 Februarij, 1608–4 Maart, 1609.—Deventer, iii. No. ccviii. pp. 169–239, *passim.*

King of Great Britain calls himself King of France, that the King of Spain calls himself King of Jerusalem."

Nothing could be more logical, nothing more historically accurate. But those plain-spoken republicans saw no advantage in beginning a negotiation for peace on the basis of their independence by permitting the archduke to call himself their sovereign, and to seal solemn state papers with their signet. It might seem picturesque to genealogical minds, it might be soothing to royal vanity, that paste counterfeits should be substituted for vanished jewels. It would be cruelty to destroy the mock glitter without cause. But there was cause. On this occasion the sham was dangerous. James Stuart might call himself King of France. He was not more likely to take practical possession of that kingdom than of the mountains in the moon. Henry of Bourbon was not at present contemplating an invasion of the hereditary possessions of the house of Albret. It was a matter of indifference to the Netherlands whether Philip III. were crowned in Jerusalem that very day, or the week afterwards, or never. It was very important however that the United Provinces should have it thoroughly recognised that they were a free and independent republic, nor could that recognition be complete so long as any human being in the whole world called himself their master, and signed with their seals of state. "'Tis absurd," said the Hollanders, "to use the names and arms of our provinces. We have as yet no precedent to prove that you consider the United Provinces as lost, and name and arms to be but wind." Barneveld reminded them that they had all expressed the most straightforward intention, and that the father commissary especially had pledged his very soul for the sincerity of the king and the archdukes. "We ourselves never wished and never could deceive any one," continued the Advocate, "and it is also very difficult for others to deceive us." [19]

This being the universal sentiment of the Netherlanders, it was thought proper to express it in respectful but vigorous

[19] Minutes of Olden-Barneveld.

language. This was done and the session was terminated. The Spanish envoys, knowing very well that neither the king nor the archduke regarded the retention of the titles and seals of all the seventeen Netherlands as an empty show, but that a secret and solid claim lurked beneath that usurpation, were very indignant. They however dissembled their wrath from the States' commissioners. They were unwilling that the negotiations should be broken up at the very first session, and they felt that neither Prince Maurice nor Barneveld was to be trifled with upon this point.[20] But they were loud and magnificent in their demonstrations when they came to talk the matter over with the ambassadors of France and England.[21] It was most portentous, they thought, to the cause of monarchy and good government all over the world, that these republicans, not content to deal with kings and princes on a footing of equality, should presume to dictate to them as to inferiors. Having passed through rebellion to liberty, they were now proceeding to trample upon the most hallowed customs and rites. What would become of royalty, if in the same breath it should not only renounce the substance, but even put away the symbols of authority. This insolence of the people was not more dangerous to the king and the archdukes than it was to every potentate in the universe. It was a sacred duty to resist such insults.[22] Sage Jeannin did his best to pacify the vehemence of the commissioners. He represented to them that foreign titles borne by anointed kings were only ensigns of historical possessions which they had for ever renounced; but that it might become one day the pleasure of Spain, or lie in the power of Spain, to vindicate her ancient rights to the provinces.

Hence the anxiety of the States was but natural. The old Leaguer and political campaigner knew very well, moreover, that at least one half of Richardot's noble wrath was feigned.[23] The commissioners would probably renounce the title and

[20] Gallucci, 355, 356. Grotius, xvii. 764, 765. Wagenaar, ix. 324–326. Meteren, 564ᵛᵒ. Bentivoglio, 564.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Gallucci, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*

[23] Gallucci, 356.

the seven seals, but in so doing would drive a hard bargain. For an empty phrase and a pennyworth of wax they would extort a heavy price. And this was what occurred. The commissioners agreed to write for fresh instructions to Brussels. A reply came in due time from the archdukes, in which they signified their willingness to abandon the title of sovereigns over all the Netherlands, and to abstain from using their signet. In exchange for this concession they merely demanded from the States-General a formal abandonment of the navigation to both the Indies. This was all. The archdukes granted liberty to the republic. The republic would renounce its commerce with more than half the world.

The scorn of the States' commissioners at this proposition can be imagined, and it became difficult indeed for them to speak on the subject in decorous language. Because the archdukes were willing to give up something which was not their property, the republic was voluntarily to open its veins and drain its very life-blood at the bidding of a foreign potentate. She was to fling away all the trophies of Heemskerk and Sebalt de Weerd, of Balthasar de Cordes, Van der Hagen, Matelieff, and Verhoeff; she was to abdicate the position which she had already acquired of mistress of the seas, and she was to deprive herself for ever of that daily increasing ocean commerce which was rapidly converting a cluster of puny, half-submerged provinces into a mighty empire. Of a certainty the Spanish court at this new epoch was an astounding anachronism. In its view Pope Alexander VI. still lived and reigned.

Liberty was not a boon conferred upon the Netherlanders by their defeated enemy. It had been gained by their own right hands; by the blood, and the gold, and the sweat of two generations. If it were the king's to give, let him try once more if he could take it away. Such were the opinions and emotions of the Dutchmen, expressed in as courteous language as they could find.

"It would be a political heresy," said Barneveld to the Spanish commissioners at this session, "if my lords the

States should by contract banish their citizens out of two-thirds of the world, both land and sea."

"'Tis strange," replied the Spaniards, "that you wish to have more than other powers—kings or republics—who never make any such pretensions. The Indies, East and West, are our house, privately possessed by us for more than a hundred years, and no one has a right to come into it without our permission. This is not banishment, but a custom to which all other nations submit. We give you your sovereignty before all the world, quitting all claims upon it. We know very well that you deny receiving it from us; but to give you a quit claim, and to permit free trade besides, would be a little more than you have a right to expect." [24]

Was it not well for the cause of liberty, commercial intercourse, and advancement of the human intellect, that there was this obstinate little republic in the world, refusing to tolerate that to which all other great powers of the earth submitted; that there was one nation determined not to acknowledge three-quarters of the world, including America and India, as the private mansion of the King of Spain, to be locked against the rest of the human race?

The next session of the negotiators after the arrival of this communication from the archdukes was a stormy one. The India trade was the sole subject of discussion. As the States were firmly resolved never to relinquish that navigation which in truth was one of their most practical and valuable possessions, and as the royal commissioners were as solemnly determined that it should never be conceded, it may be imagined how much breath, how much foolscap paper, was wasted.

In truth, the negotiation for peace had been a vile mockery from the beginning. Spain had no real intention of abdicating her claim to the United Provinces.

[24] Minutes of Olden-Barneveld, *ubi sup.* "Dattet hunl. Huys was over hundert jaren privatim beseten en dat men daer jegens hun danck niet behoorde te komen. Datter geen bannissement was maer een gebruyck als de andere Coningen en Republiquen deden," &c.

At the very moment when the commissioners were categorically making that concession in Brussels, and claiming such a price for it, Hoboken, the archduke's diplomatic representative in London, was earnestly assuring King James that neither his master nor Philip had the remotest notion of renouncing their sovereignty over all the Netherlands. What had been said and written to that effect was merely a device, he asserted, to bring about a temporary truce. During the interval of imaginary freedom it was certain that the provinces would fall into such dire confusion that it would be easier for Spain to effect their re-conquest, after a brief delay for repairing her own strength, than it would be by continuing the present war without any cessation.[25]

The Spanish ambassador at Vienna too on his part assured the Emperor Rudolph that his master was resolved never to abdicate the sovereignty of the provinces. The negotiations then going on, he said, were simply intended to extort from the States a renunciation of the India trade and their consent to the re-introduction of the Catholic religion throughout their territories.

Something of all this was known and much more suspected at the Hague; the conviction therefore that no faith would be kept with rebels and heretics, whatever might be said or written, gained strength every day. That these delusive negotiations with the Hollanders were not likely to be so successful as the comedy enacted twenty years before at Bourbourg, for the amusement of Queen Elizabeth and her diplomatists while the tragedy of the Armada was preparing, might be safely prophesied. Richardot was as effective as ever in the part which he had so often played, but Spinola laboured under the disadvantage of being a far honester man than Alexander Farnese. Far from equal to that famous chieftain in the management of a great military campaign, it is certain that he was infinitely inferior to him in genteel comedy. Whether Maurice and Lewis William, Barneveld and Brederode, were to do better in the parts

[25] Meteren, 565.

formerly assigned to John Rogers, Valentine Dale, Comptroller Croft, and their colleagues, remained to be seen.

On the 15th of February, at the fifth conference of the commissioners, the first pitched battle on the India trade was fought. Thereafter the combat was almost every day renewed. Exactly, as a year before, the news of Heemskerk's victory at Gibraltar had made the king and the archdukes eager to obtain an armistice with the rebels both by land and sea, so now the report of Matelieff's recent achievements in the Indian ocean was increasing their anxiety to exclude the Netherlanders from the regions which they were rapidly making their own. 15 Feb. 1608.

As we look back upon the negotiations, after the lapse of two centuries and a half, it becomes difficult to suppress our amazement at those scenes of solemn trickery and superhuman pride. It is not necessary to follow, step by step, the proceedings at each daily conference, but it is impossible for me not to detain the reader for yet a season longer with those transactions, and especially to invite him to ponder the valuable lesson which in their entirety they convey.

No higher themes could possibly be laid before statesmen to discuss. Questions of political self-government, religious liberty, national independence, divine Right, rebellious Power, freedom of commerce, supremacy of the seas, omnipotence claimed by the old world over the destiny of what was called the new, were importunately demanding solution. All that most influenced human passion, or stirred human reason to its depths—at that memorable point of time when two great epochs seemed to be sweeping against each other in elemental conflict—was to be dealt with. The emancipated currents of human thought, the steady tide of ancient dogma, were mingling in wrath. There are times of paroxysm in which Nature seems to effect more in a moment, whether intellectually or materially, than at other periods during a lapse of years. The shock of forces, long preparing and long delayed, is apt at last to make itself sensible to those neglectful of

gradual but vital changes. Yet there are always ears that remain deaf to the most portentous din.

Thus, after that half century of war, the policy of Spain was still serenely planting itself on the position occupied before the outbreak of the revolt. The commonwealth, solidly established by a free people, already one of the most energetic and thriving among governments, a recognised member of the great international family, was now gravely expected to purchase from its ancient tyrant the independence which it had long possessed, while the price demanded for the free papers was not only extravagant, but would be disgraceful to an emancipated slave. Holland was not likely at that turning point in her history, and in the world's history, to be false to herself and to the great principles of public law. It was good for the cause of humanity that the republic should reappear at that epoch. It was wholesome for Europe that there should be just then a plain self-governing people, able to speak homely and important truths. It was healthy for the moral and political atmosphere—in those days and in the time to come—that a fresh breeze from that little sea-born commonwealth should sweep away some of the ancient fog through which a few very feeble and very crooked mortals had so long loomed forth like giants and gods.

To vindicate the laws of nations and of nature ; to make a noble effort for reducing to a system—conforming, at least approximately, to divine reason—the chaotic elements of war and peace ; to recal the great facts that earth, sea, and sky ought to belong to mankind, and not to an accidental and very limited selection of the species, was not an unworthy task for a people which had made such unexampled sacrifies for liberty and right.

Accordingly, at the conference on the 15th February, the Spanish commissioners categorically summoned the States to desist entirely from the trade to either India, exactly as before the war. To enforce this prohibition, they said, was the principal reason why Philip desired peace. To obtain their freedom was surely well worth renunciation of this

traffic; the more so, because their trade with Spain, which was so much shorter and safer, was now to be re-opened. If they had been able to keep that commerce, it was suggested, they would have never talked about the Indies. The commissioners added, that this boon had not been conceded to France nor England, by the treaties of Vervins and London, and that the States therefore could not find it strange that it should be refused to them.[26]

The States' commissioners stoutly replied that commerce was open to all the world, that trade was free by the great law of nature, and that neither France, England, nor the United Provinces, were to receive edicts on this great subject from Spain and Portugal. It was absurd to circumscribe commercial intercourse at the very moment of exchanging war for peace. To recognise the liberty of the States upon paper, and to attempt the imposition of servitude in reality, was a manifest contradiction. The ocean was free to all nations. It had not been enclosed by Spain with a rail-fence.[27]

The debate grew more stormy every hour. Spinola expressed great indignation that the Netherlanders should be so obstinate upon this point. The tall, spare President arose in wrath from his seat at the council-board, loudly protesting that the King of Spain would never renounce his sovereignty over the provinces until they had forsworn the India trade; and with this menace stalked out of the room.[28]

The States' commissioners were not frightened. Barneveld was at least a match for Richardot, and it was better, after all, that the cards should be played upon the table. Subsequent

[26] Wagenaar, ix 327, *seqq.* Meteren, 565, 567–593. Grotius, xvii 763–781. Gallucci, 356–358.

[27] Oceanum quippe *nullis clausum cancellis* cunctis nationibus patere." —Gallucci, 357. It is impossible in this connection not to recal the quaint words of a great poet of our own country in a famous idyl written two and a half centuries later than these transactions:—

"We own the ocean, too, John,
You mustn't think it hard
If we can't think with you, John,
It's just your own back yard.

Old uncle S., says he, I guess
If that's his game, says he,
The fencing stuff will cost enough
To bust up friend J. B.
As well as you and me."

J. R. Lowell.

[28] Meteren, Grotius, Gallucci, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.*

meetings were quite as violent as the first, the country was agitated far and wide, the prospects of pacification dwindled to a speck in the remote horizon. Arguments at the Board of Conference, debates in the States-General, pamphlets by merchants and advocates—especially several emanating from the East India Company—handled the great topic from every point of view, and it became more and more evident that Spain could not be more resolute to prohibit than the republic to claim the trade.[29]

It was an absolute necessity, so it was urged, for the Hollanders to resist the tyrannical dominion of the Spaniards. But this would be impossible for them, should they rely on the slender natural resources of their own land. Not a sixth part of the population could be nourished from the soil. The ocean was their inheritance, their birthright, their empire. It was necessary that Spain should understand this first, last, and always. She ought to comprehend, too, that her recognition of Dutch independence was not a gift, but the acknowledgment of a fact. Without that acknowledgment peace was impossible. If peace were to be established, it was not to be bought by either party. Each gave and each received, and certainly Spain was in no condition to dictate the terms of a sale. Peace, without freedom of commerce, would be merely war without killing, and therefore without result. The Netherlanders, who in the middle of the previous century had risen against unjust taxation and arbitrary laws, had not grown so vile as to accept from a vanquished foe what they had spurned from their prince. To be exiled from the ocean was an unimaginable position for the republic. Moreover, to retire from the Indies would be to abandon her Oriental allies, and would be a dishonour as well as a disaster. Her good faith, never yet contaminated, would be stained, were she now to desert the distant peoples and potentates with whom she had formed treaties of friendship and commerce, and hand them over to the vengeance of the Spaniards and Portuguese.[30]

[29] Authorities last cited. [30] Ibid.

And what a trade it was which the United Provinces were thus called upon to renounce! The foreign commerce of no other nation could be compared in magnitude to that of their commonwealth. Twenty ships traded regularly to Guinea, eighty to the Cape de Verd Islands, twenty to America, and forty to the East Indies. Ten thousand sailors, who gained their living in this traffic, would be thrown out of employment, if the States should now listen to the Spanish propositions.[31]

It was well known too that the profits of the East India Company had vastly increased of late, and were augmenting with every year. The trade with Cambay, Malabar, Ceylon, Koromandel, and Queda, had scarcely begun, yet was already most promising. Should the Hollanders only obtain a footing in China, they felt confident of making their way through the South Seas and across the pole to India. Thus the search for a great commercial highway between Cathay, Europe, and the New World, which had been baffled in the arctic regions, should be crowned with success at the antarctic, while it was deemed certain that there were many lands, lighted by the Southern Cross, awaiting the footsteps of the fortunate European discoverer. What was a coasting-trade with Spain compared with this boundless career of adventure? Now that the world's commerce, since the discovery of America and the passage around the Cape of Good Hope, had become oceanic and universal, was the nation which took the lead on blue water to go back to the creeping land-locked navigation of the ancient Greeks and Phœnicians? If the East India Company, in whose womb was empire, were now destroyed, it would perish with its offspring for ever. There would be no regeneration at a future day. The Company's ships too were a navy in themselves, as apt for war as for trade. This the Spaniards and Portuguese had already learned to their cost. The merchant-traders to Spain would be always in the power of Spain, and at any favourable moment might be seized by Spain. The Spanish monopoly in the East and West was the great source of Spanish power, the chief cause of the contempt

[31] Authorities last cited.

with which the Spanish monarchy looked down upon other nations. Let those widely expanded wings be clipped, and Spain would fall from her dizzy height. To know what the States ought to refuse the enemy, it was only necessary to observe what he strenuously demanded, to ponder the avowed reason why he desired peace. The enemy was doing his best to damage the commonwealth; the States were merely anxious to prevent injury to themselves and to all the world; to vindicate for themselves, and for all men, the common use of ocean, land, and sky.

A nation which strove to shut up the seas, and to acquire a monopoly of the world's trade, was a pirate, an enemy of mankind. She was as deserving of censure as those who created universal misery in time of famine, by buying up all the corn in order to enrich themselves. According to the principles of the ancients, it was legitimate to make war upon such States as closed their own ports to foreign intercourse. Still more just was it, therefore, to carry arms against a nation which closed the ports of other people.[32]

The dispute about the India navigation could be settled in a moment, if Spain would but keep her word. She had acknowledged the great fact of independence, which could not be gainsaid. Let each party to the negotiation, therefore, keep that which it already possessed. Let neither attempt to prescribe to the other—both being free and independent States—any regulations about interior or foreign trade.[33]

Thus reasoned the States-General, the East India directors, the great majority of the population of the provinces, upon one great topic of discussion. A small minority only attempted to defend the policy of renouncing the India trade as a branch of industry, in which a certain class, and that only in the maritime provinces, was interested. It is certainly no slight indication of the liberty of thought, of speech, and of the press, enjoyed at that epoch in the Netherlands—and nowhere else to anything like the same extent—that

[32] Authorities last cited. [33] Ibid.

such opinions, on a subject deemed vital to the very existence of the republic, were freely published and listened to with toleration, if not with respect. Even the enlightened mind of Grotius was troubled with terrors as to the effect on the public mind at this crisis of anonymous pamphlets concerning political affairs.[34] But in this regard it must be admitted that Grotius was not in advance of his age, although fully conceding that press-laws were inconsistent with human liberty.

Maurice and Barneveld were equally strenuous in maintaining the India trade; the prince, because he hoped that resistance to Spain upon this point would cause the negotiations to be broken off, the Advocate in the belief that firmness on the part of the States would induce the royal commissioners to yield.

The States-General were not likely to be deficient in firmness. They felt that the republic was exactly on the point of wresting the control of the East from the hands of the Portuguese, and they were not inclined to throw away the harvest of their previous labours just as it was ripening. Ten thousand persons at least, besides the sailors employed, were directly interested in the traffic, most of whom possessed great influence in the commonwealth, and would cause great domestic dissension should they now be sacrificed to Spain. To keep the India trade was the best guarantee for the future possession of the traffic to Spain; for the Spanish Government would never venture an embargo upon the direct intercourse between the provinces and its own dominions, for fear of vengeance in the East. On the other hand, by denouncing oceanic commerce, they would soon find themselves without a navy at all, and their peaceful coasting ships would be at the mercy of Spain or of any power possessing that maritime energy which would have been killed in the republic. By abandoning the ocean, the young commonwealth would sink into sloth, and become the just object of contempt to the

[34] "Non minimum ego istius reipublicæ malum arbitror tantam in plebe libellis concitanda proterviam vetitam sæpe et tunc novo edicto nec repressam tamen, dum acris indago et graves pœnæ repudiantur ut libertati contraria."—Grotius, xvii. 776.

world. It would cease to be an independent power, and deserve to fall a prey to any enterprising neighbour.[35]

Even Villeroy admitted the common belief to be, that if the India trade were abandoned "the States would melt away like snow in the sun."[36] He would not, on that account, however, counsel to the States obstinacy upon the subject, if Spain refused peace or truce except on condition of their exclusion from the traffic.[37] Jeannin, Villeroy, and their master; Isaac le Maire and Peter Plancius, could have told the reason why if they had chosen.

Early in March a triple proposition was made by the States' commissioners. Spain might take her choice to make peace on the basis of free trade; to make peace, leaving everything beyond the Tropic of Cancer to the chance of war; or to make peace in regard to all other than the tropical regions, concluding for those only a truce during a definite number of years.[38]

The Spaniards rejected decidedly two of these suggestions. Of course they would not concede freedom of the sea. They considered the mixture of peace and war a monstrous conception. They were, however, willing to favour peace for Europe and truce in the tropics, provided the States bound themselves, on the expiration of the limited period, to abandon the Indian and American trade for ever. And to this proposition the States of course were deaf. And thus they went on spinning around, day after day, in the same vicious circle, without more hope of progress than squirrels in a cage.

Barneveld, always overbearing with friend or foe, and often violent, was not disposed to make preposterous concessions, notwithstanding his eager desire for peace. "The might of the States-General," said he, "is so great, thank God, that they need not yield so much to the King of Spain as seems to be expected, nor cover themselves with dishonour."

"And do you think yourselves more mighty than the

[35] Wagenaar, ix. 332, 334. [36] Jeannin, i. 625. [37] Ibid.
[38] Wagenaar, ix. 334. Gallucci, 358, 359. Bentivoglio, 565.

Kings of England and France ?" cried Richardot in a great rage, "for they never dared to make any attempt upon the Indies, East or West."[39]

"We are willing to leave the king in his own quarters," was the reply, "and we expect him to leave us in ours."

"You had better take a sheet of paper at once," said Richardot, "write down exactly what you wish, and order us to agree to it all without discussion."

"We demand nothing that is unreasonable in these negotiations," was the firm rejoinder, "and expect that nothing unjust will be required of us."[40]

It was now suggested by the States' commissioners that a peace, with free navigation, might be concluded for Europe, and a truce for other parts of the world, without any stipulations as to what should take place on its termination.

This was hardly anything new, but it served as a theme for more intellectual buffeting. Hard words were freely exchanged during several hours, and all parties lost their temper. At last the Spaniards left the conference-chamber in a rage. Just as they were going, Barneveld asked them whether he should make a protocol of the session for the States-General, and whether it was desirable in future to resume the discussion.

"Let every one do exactly as he likes," replied Spinola, wrathfully, as he moved to the door.

Friar John, always plausible, whispered a few soothing words in the ear of the marquis, adding aloud, so that the commissioners might hear, "Night brings counsel." These words he spoke in Latin.

"He who wishes to get everything is apt to lose everything," cried out Maldere, the Zeeland deputy, in Spanish, to the departing commissioners.

"Take that to yourselves," rejoined Richardot, very fiercely; "you may be sure that it will be your case."[41]

So ended that interview.

[39] Minutes of Olden-Barneveld, 191, and note from Memoire van Staet.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Jeannin, i. 595.

Directly afterwards there was a conference between the States' commissioners and the French envoys.

Jeannin employed all his powers of argument and persuasion to influence the Netherlanders against a rupture of the negotiations because of the India trade. It would be better to abandon that commerce, so he urged, than to give up the hope of peace. The commissioners failed to see the logic or to melt at the eloquence of his discourse. They would have been still less inclined, if that were possible, to move from their position, had they known of the secret conferences which Jeannin had just been holding with Isaac le Maire of Amsterdam, and other merchants practically familiar with the India trade. Carrying out the French king's plan to rob the republic of that lucrative traffic, and to transplant it, by means of experienced Hollanders, into France, the president, while openly siding with the States, as their most disinterested friend, was secretly doing all in his power to destroy the very foundation of their commonwealth.[42]

Isaac le Maire came over from Amsterdam in a mysterious manner, almost in disguise. Had his nocturnal dealings with the French minister been known, he would have been rudely dealt with by the East India Company. He was a native of Tournay, not a sincere republican therefore, was very strongly affected to France, and declared that all his former fellow-townsmen, and many more, had the *fleur-de-lys* stamped on their hearts. If peace should be made without stipulation in favour of the East India Company, he, with his three brothers, would do what they could to transfer that corporation to France. All the details of such a prospective arrangement were thoroughly discussed, and it was intimated that the king would be expected to take shares in the enterprise. Jeannin had also repeated conferences on the same subject with the great cosmographer Plancius. It may be well understood, therefore, that the minister of Henry IV. was not very ardent to encourage the States in their resolve to oppose peace or truce, except with concession of the India trade.[43]

[42] Jeannin, i. 603-606. [43] Ibid.

The States preferred that the negotiations should come to nought on the religious ground rather than on account of the India trade. The provinces were nearly unanimous as to the prohibition of the Catholic worship, not from bigotry for their own or hatred of other creeds, but from larger views of what was then called tolerance, and from practical regard for the necessities of the State. To permit the old worship, not from a sense of justice but as an article of bargain with a foreign power, was not only to abase the government of the States but to convert every sincere Catholic throughout the republic into a grateful adherent of Philip and the archdukes. It was deliberately to place a lever, to be used in all future time, for the overthrow of their political structure.

In this the whole population was interested, while the India navigation, although vital to the well-being of the nation, was not yet universally recognised as so supremely important, and was declared by a narrow-minded minority to concern the provinces of Holland and Zeeland alone.

All were silently agreed, therefore, to defer the religious question to the last.

Especially, commercial greed induced the States to keep a firm clutch on the great river on which the once splendid city of Antwerp stood. Ever since that commercial metropolis had succumbed to Farnese, the republic had maintained the lower forts, by means of which, and of Flushing at the river's mouth, Antwerp was kept in a state of suspended animation. To open the navigation of the Scheld, to permit free approach to Antwerp, would, according to the narrow notions of the Amsterdam merchants, be destructive to their own flourishing trade.

In vain did Richardot, in one well-fought conference, do his best to obtain concessions on this important point. The States' commissioners were as deaf as the Spaniards had been on the India question. Richardot, no longer loud and furious, began to cry. With tears running down his cheeks,[44] he besought the Netherlanders not to insist so strenuously upon all

[44] Grotius, xvii. 769.

their points, and to remember that concessions were mutually necessary, if an amicable arrangement were to be framed. The chances for peace were promising. "Let not a blight be thrown over all our hopes," he exclaimed, "by too great pertinacity on either side. Above all, let not the States dictate terms as to a captive or conquered king, but propose such conditions as a benevolent but powerful sovereign could accept."

These adjurations might be considered admirable, if it had been possible for the royal commissioners to point to a single mustard-seed of concession ever vouchsafed by them to the republic.

Meantime the month of March had passed. Nothing had been accomplished, but it was agreed to prolong the armistice through April and May.

The negotiations having feebly dribbled off into almost absolute extinction, Friar John was once more set in motion, and despatched to Madrid. He was sent to get fresh instructions from Philip, and he promised, on departing, to return in forty days. He hoped as his reward, he said, to be made bishop of Utrecht. "That will be a little above your calibre," replied Barneveld.[45] Forty days was easily said, and the States consented to the additional delay.

During his absence there was much tedious discussion of minor matters, such as staple rights of wine and cloths, regulations of boundaries, removal of restrictions on trade and navigation, passports, sequestered estates, and the like; all of which were subordinate to the all-important subjects of India and Religion, those two most tender topics growing so much more tender the more they were handled as to cause at last a shiver whenever they were approached. Nevertheless both were to be dealt with, or the negotiations would fall to the ground.[46]

The States felt convinced that they would fall to the ground, that they had fallen to the ground, and they at least would not stoop to pick them up again.

[45] Minutes of Olden-Barneveld, 205.
[46] Grotius, xvii. Wagenaar, ix. 343, *seqq.* Meteren, B. xxix. Van der Kemp, 36, 37, 154–157.

The forty days passed away, but the friar never returned. April and May came and went, and again the armistice expired by its own limitation. The war party was disgusted with the solemn trifling, Maurice was exasperated beyond endurance, Barneveld and the peace men began to find immense difficulty in confronting the gathering storm.

The prince, with difficulty, consented to a prolongation of the armistice for two months longer; resolute to resume hostilities should no accord be made before the end of July. The Advocate, with much earnestness, and with more violence than was habitual with him, insisted on protracting the temporary truce until the end of the year. The debates in the States-General and the state-council were vehement; passion rose to fever-heat, but the stadholder, although often half beside himself with rage, ended by submitting once more to the will of Barneveld.

This was the easier, as the Advocate at last proposed an agreement which seemed to Maurice and Lewis William even better than their own original suggestion. It was arranged that the armistice should be prolonged until the end of the year, but it was at the same time stipulated that unless the negotiations had reached a definite result before the 1st of August, they should be forthwith broken off.

Thus a period of enforced calm—a kind of vacation, as if these great soldiers and grey-beards had been a troop of idle school-boys—was now established, without the slightest reason.

President Jeannin took occasion to make a journey to Paris, leaving the Hague on the 20th June.

During his absence a treaty of the States with England, similar in its terms to the one recently concluded between the republic and France, but only providing for half the number of auxiliary troops arranged for in the French convention, was signed at the Hague. The English plenipotentiaries, Winwood and Spencer, wished to delay the exchange of signatures under the pending negotiations with Spain and the archdukes were brought to a close, as King James was most desirous at that epoch to

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keep on good terms with his Catholic Majesty. The States were so urgent, however, to bring at least this matter to a termination, and the English so anxious lest France should gain still greater influence than she now enjoyed in the provinces, that they at last gave way. It was further stipulated in the convention that the debt of the States to England, then amounting to 818,408*l.* sterling, should be settled by annual payments of 60,000*l.*; to begin with the expected peace.[47]

Besides this debt to the English Government, the States-General owed nine millions of florins (900,000*l.*), and the separate provinces altogether eighteen millions (1,800,000*l.*). In short, there would be a deficiency of at least three hundred thousand florins[48] a month if the war went on, although every imaginable device had already been employed for increasing the revenue from taxation. It must be admitted therefore, that the Barneveld party were not to be severely censured for their desire to bring about an honourable peace

That Jeannin was well aware of the disposition prevailing throughout a great part of the commonwealth is certain. It is equally certain that he represented to his sovereign, while at Paris, that the demand upon his exchequer by the States, in case of the resumption of hostilities, would be more considerable than ever. Immense was the pressure put upon Henry by the Spanish court, during the summer, to induce him to abandon his allies. Very complicated were the nets thrown out to entangle the wary old politician in "the grey jacket and with the heart of gold," as he was fond of designating himself, into an alliance with Philip and the archdukes.

Don Pedro de Toledo, at the head of a magnificent embassy, arrived in Paris with projects of arranging single, double, or triple marriages between the respective nurseries of France and Spain. The Infanta might marry with a French prince, and have all the Netherlands for her dower, so soon as the childless archdukes should have departed this

[47] Wagenaar, ix. 344. [48] Ibid, 377. Compare Grotius, xvii. 777.

life. Or an Infante might espouse a daughter of France with the same heritage assigned to the young couple.

Such proposals, duly set forth in sonorous Spanish by the Constable of Castile, failed to produce a very soothing effect on Henry's delicate ear. He had seen and heard enough of gaining thrones by Spanish marriages. Had not the very crown on his own head, which he had won with foot in stirrup and lance in rest, been hawked about for years, appended to the wedding ring of the Spanish Infanta? It might become convenient to him, at some later day, to form a family alliance with the house of Austria, although he would not excite suspicion in the United Provinces by openly accepting it then. But to wait for the shoes of Albert and Isabella, and until the Dutch republic had been absorbed into the obedient Netherlands by his assistance, was not a very flattering prospect for a son or daughter of France. The ex-Huguenot and indomitable campaigner in the field or in politics was for more drastic measures. Should the right moment come, he knew well enough how to strike, and could appropriate the provinces, obedient or disobedient, without assistance from the Spanish babies.[49]

Don Pedro took little by his propositions. The king stoutly declared that the Netherlands were very near to his heart, and that he would never abandon them on any consideration. So near, indeed, that he meant to bring them still nearer, but this was not then suspected by the Spanish court; Henry, the while, repelling as a personal insult to himself the request that he should secretly labour to reduce the United Provinces under subjection to the archdukes. It had even been proposed that he should sign a secret convention to that effect, and there were those about the court who were not ill-disposed for such a combination. The king was, however, far too adroit to be caught in any such trap. The marriage proposals in themselves he did not dislike, but Jeannin and he were both of a mind that they should be kept entirely secret.

[49] Wagenaar, ix. 350–357. Grotius, xvii. 774. Jeannin.

Don Pedro, on the contrary, for obvious reasons, was for making the transactions ostentatiously public, and, as a guarantee of his master's good faith in regard to the heritage of the Netherlands, he proposed that every portion of the republic, thenceforth to be conquered by the allies, should be confided to hands in which Henry and the archdukes would have equal confidence.

But these artifices were too trivial to produce much effect. Henry remained true, in his way, to the States-General, and Don Pedro was much laughed at in Paris, although the public scarcely knew wherefore.

These intrigues had not been conducted so mysteriously but that Barneveld was aware of what was going on. Both before Jeannin's departure from the Hague in June, and on his return in the middle of August, he catechised him very closely on the subject. The old Leaguer was too deep, however, to be thoroughly pumped, even by so practised a hand as the Advocate's, so that more was suspected than at the time was accurately known.

As, at the memorable epoch of the accession of the King of Scots to the throne of Elizabeth, Maximilian de Bethune had flattered the new monarch with the prospect of a double marriage, so now Don Fernando Girono had been sent on solemn mission to England, in order to offer the same infants to James which Don Pedro was placing at the disposition of Henry.

The British sovereign, as secretly fascinated by the idea of a Spanish family alliance as he had ever been by the proposals of the Marquis de Rosny for the French marriages, listened with eagerness. Money was scattered as profusely among the English courtiers by Don Fernando as had been done by De Bethune four years before.[50] The bribes were accepted, and often by the very personages who knew the colour of Bourbon money, but the ducats were scarcely earned. Girono, thus urging on the English Government the necessity of deserting the republic and cementing a

[50] Wagenaar, ix. 355, 356. Jeannin.

cordial, personal, and political understanding between James and Philip, effected but little. It soon became thoroughly understood in England that the same bargaining was going on simultaneously in France. As it was evident that the Spanish children could not be disposed of in both markets at the same time, it was plain to the dullest comprehension that either the brokerage of Toledo or of Girono was a sham, and that a policy erected upon such flimsy foundations would soon be washed away.

It is certain, however, that James, while affecting friendship for the States, and signing with them the league of mutual assistance, was secretly longing to nibble the bait dangled before him by Girono, and was especially determined to prevent, if possible, the plans of Toledo.

Meantime, brother John Neyen was dealing with Philip and the Duke of Lerma, in Spain.

The friar strenuously urged upon the favourite and the rest of the royal advisers the necessity of prompt action with the States. This needed not interfere with an unlimited amount of deception. It was necessary to bring the negotiations to a definite agreement. It would be by no means requisite, however, to hold to that agreement whenever a convenient opportunity for breaking it should present itself. The first object of Spanish policy, argued honest John, should be to get the weapons out of the rebels' hands. The Netherlanders ought to be encouraged to return to their usual pursuits of commerce and manufactures, whence they derived their support, and to disband their military and naval forces. Their sailors and traders should be treated kindly in Spain, instead of being indulged as heretofore with no hospitality save that of the Holy Inquisition and its dungeons. Let their minds be disarmed of all suspicion. Now the whole population of the provinces had been convinced that Spain, in affecting to treat, was secretly devising means to re-impose her ancient yoke upon their necks.[51]

Time went by in Aranjuez and Madrid. The forty

[51] Gallucci 361, 363.

days, promised as the period of Neyen's absence, were soon gone; but what were forty days, or forty times forty, at the Spanish court? The friar, who, whatever his faults, was anything but an idler, chafed at a procrastination which seemed the more stupendous to him, coming fresh as he did from a busy people who knew the value of time. In the anguish of his soul he went to Rodrigo Calderon, of the privy council, and implored his influence with Government to procure leave for him to depart. Calderon, in urbane but decisive terms, assured him that this would be impossible before the king should return to Madrid. The monk then went to Idiaquez, who was in favour of his proceeding at once to the Netherlands, but who on being informed that Calderon was of a different opinion, gave up the point. More distressed than ever, Neyen impored Prada's assistance, but Prada plunged him into still deeper despair. His Majesty, said that counsellor, with matchless effrontery, was studying the propositions of the States-General, and all the papers in the negotiation, line by line, comma by comma. There were many animadversions to make, many counter suggestions to offer. The king was pondering the whole subject most diligently. When those lucubrations were finished, the royal decision, aided by the wisdom of the privy council, would be duly communicated to the archdukes.[52]

To wait for an answer to the propositions of the suspicious States-General until Philip III. had mastered the subject in detail, was a prospect too dreary even for the equable soul of Brother John. Dismayed at the position in which he found himself, he did his best to ferret out the reasons for the preposterous delay; not being willing to be paid off in allusions to the royal investigations. He was still further appalled at last by discovering that the delay was absolutely for the delay's sake. It was considered inconsistent with the dignity of the Government not to delay. The court and cabinet had quite made up their minds as to the answer to be made to the last propositions of the rebels, but to make

[52] Gallucci, 361, 363.

it known at once was entirely out of the question. In the previous year his Majesty's administration, so it was now confessed with shame, had acted with almost indecent haste. That everything had been conceded to the confederated provinces was the common talk of Europe. Let the time-honoured, inveterate custom of Spain in grave affairs to proceed slowly, and therefore surely, be in future observed. A proper self-respect required the king to keep the universe in suspense for a still longer period upon the royal will and the decision of the royal council.[53]

Were the affairs of the mighty Spanish empire so subordinate to the convenience of that portion of it called the Netherlands that no time was to be lost before settling their affairs?[54]

Such dismal frivolity, such palsied pride, seems scarcely credible; but more than all this has been carefully recorded in the letters of the friar.

If it were precipitation to spend the whole year 1607 in forming a single phrase; to wit, that the archdukes and the king would treat with the United Provinces as with countries to which they made no pretensions; and to spend the best part of another year in futile efforts to recal that phrase; if all this had been recklessness and haste, then, surely, the most sluggish canal in Holland was a raging cataract, and the march of a glacier electric speed.

Midsummer had arrived. The period in which peace was to be made or abandoned altogether had passed. Jeannin had returned from his visit to Paris; the Danish envoys, sent to watch the negotiations, had left the Hague, utterly disgusted with a puppet-show, all the strings of which, they protested, were pulled from the Louvre. Brother John, exasperated by the superhuman delays, fell sick of a fever at Burgos, and was sent, on his recovery, to the court at Valladolid to be

[53] "An existimationem quoque rei facere ut diutius in expectatione regiæ voluntatis regiique senatus-consulti suspensus esset orbis terrarum."—Gallucci, *ubi sup.*

[54] Neyen's letters to Spinola, 23 May, 1608, in Gallucci, 362 363.

made ill again by the same cause, and still there came no sound from the Government of Spain.[55]

At last the silence was broken. Something that was called the voice of the king reached the ears of the archduke. Long had he wrestled in prayer on this great subject, said Philip III., fervently had he besought the Omnipotent for light. He had now persuaded himself that he should not fulfil his duty to God, nor satisfy his own strong desire for maintaining the Catholic faith, nor preserve his self-respect, if he now conceded his supreme right to the Confederated Provinces at any other price than the uncontrolled exercise, within their borders, of the Catholic religion. He wished, therefore, as obedient son of the Church and Defender of the Faith, to fulfil this primary duty, untrammelled by any human consideration, by any profit that might induce him towards a contrary course. That which he had on other occasions more than once signified he now confirmed. His mind was fixed ; this was his last and immutable determination, that if the confederates should permit the free and public exercise of the Catholic, Roman, Apostolic religion to all such as wished to live and die in it, for this cause so grateful to God, and for no other reason, he also would permit to them that supreme right over the provinces, and that authority which now belonged to himself. Natives and residents of those countries should enjoy liberty, just so long as the exercise of the Catholic religion flourished there, and not one day nor hour longer.

Philip then proceeded flatly to refuse the India navigation, giving reasons very satisfactory to himself why the provinces ought cheerfully to abstain from that traffic. If the confederates, in consequence of the conditions thus definitely announced, moved by their innate pride and obstinacy, and relying on the assistance of their allies, should break off the negotiations, then it would be desirable to adopt the plan proposed by Jeannin to Richardot, and conclude a truce for five or six years. The king expressed his own decided pre-

[55] Neyen to Spinola, 20 Aug. 1608, in Gallucci, 369.

ference for a truce rather than a peace, and his conviction that Jeannin had made the suggestion by command of his sovereign.[56]

The negotiators stood exactly where they did when Friar John, disguised as a merchant, first made his bow to the Prince and Barneveld in the palace at the Hague.

The archduke, on receiving at last this peremptory letter from the king, had nothing for it but to issue instructions accordingly to the plenipotentiaries at the Hague. 20 Aug. 1608. A decisive conference between those diplomatists and the States' commissioners took place immediately afterwards.

It was on the 20th August.

Although it had been agreed on the 1st May to break off negotiations on the ensuing 1st of August, should no result be reached, yet three weeks beyond that period had been suffered to elapse, under a tacit agreement to wait a little longer for the return of the friar. President Jeannin, too, had gone to Paris on the 20th June, to receive new and important instructions, verbal and written, from his sovereign, and during his absence it had not been thought expedient to transact much business. Jeannin returned to the Hague on the 15th of August, and, as definite instructions from king and archduke had now arrived, there seemed no possibility of avoiding an explanation.

The Spanish envoys accordingly, with much gravity, and as if they had been propounding some cheerful novelty, announced to the assembled commissioners that all reports hitherto flying about as to the Spanish king's intentions were false.

His Majesty had no intention of refusing to give up the sovereignty of the provinces. On the contrary, they were instructed to concede that sovereignty freely and frankly to my lords the States-General—a pearl and a precious jewel, the like of which no prince had ever given away before. Yet the king desired neither gold nor silver, neither cities nor

[56] King to the Archdukes, in Gallucci, 365, 367.

anything else of value in exchange. He asked only for that which was indispensable to the tranquillity of his conscience before God, to wit, the re-establishment in those countries of the Catholic Apostolic Roman religion.[57] This there could surely be no reasons for refusing. They owed it as a return for the generosity of the king, they owed it to their own relatives, they owed it to the memory of their ancestors, not to show greater animosity to the ancient religion than to the new and pernicious sect of Anabaptists, born into the world for the express purpose of destroying empires; they owed it to their many fellow-citizens, who would otherwise be driven into exile, because deprived of that which is dearest to humanity.[58]

In regard to the East India navigation, inasmuch as the provinces had no right whatever to it, and as no other prince but the sovereign of Spain had any pretensions to it, his Majesty expected that the States would at once desist from it.[59]

This was the magnificent result of twenty months of diplomacy. As the king's father had long ago flung away the pearl and precious jewel which the son now made a merit of selling to its proprietors at the price of their life's blood—the world's commerce—it is difficult to imagine that Richardot, while communicating this preposterous ultimatum, could have kept his countenance. But there were case-hardened politicians on both sides. The proposition was made and received with becoming seriousness, and it was decided by the States' commissioners to make no answer at all on that occasion. They simply promised to render their report to the States-General, who doubtless would make short work with the matter.

They made their report and it occasioned a tumult. Every member present joined in a general chorus of wrathful denunciation. The Spanish commissioners were infamous swindlers, it was loudly asserted. There should be no more dealings with them at all. Spain was a power only to be

[57] Van der Kemp, iii. 156–160, from Sec. Res. Stat.-Gen. Grotius, xvii. 775. Wagenaar. [58] Grotius, *ubi sup.* [59] Van der Kemp, *ubi sup.*

treated with on the battle-field. In the tempest of general rage no one would listen to argument, no one asked which would be the weaker, which the stronger party, what resources for the renewed warfare could be found, or who would be the allies of the republic. Hatred, warlike fury and scorn at the duplicity with which they had been treated, washed every more politic sentiment away, and metamorphosed that body of burghers as in an instant. The negotiations should be broken off, not on one point, but on all points, and nothing was left but to prepare instantly for war.[60]

Three days later, after the French and English ambassadors, as well as Prince Maurice and Count Lewis William, had been duly consulted, comparative calm was restored, and a decisive answer was unanimously voted by the States-General. The proposition of the commissioners was simply declared to be in direct violation of the sovereignty and freedom of the country, and it was announced that, if it should be persisted in, the whole negotiation might be considered as broken off. A formal answer to the royal propositions would be communicated likewise to the envoys of foreign powers, in order that the royal commissioners might be placed completely in the wrong.[61] 23 August, 1608.

On the 25th August an elaborate response was accordingly delivered in writing by the States' commissioners to those of the archdukes and king, it being at the same time declared by Barneveld and his colleagues that their functions were ended, and that this document, emanating from the States-General, was a sovereign resolution, not a diplomatic note.[62] 25 August, 1608.

The contents of this paper may be inferred from all that has been previously narrated. The republic knew its own mind, and had always expressed itself with distinctness. The Spanish Government having at last been brought to disclose its intentions, there was an end to the negotiations for peace. The rupture was formally announced.

[60] Jeannin, i. 819. [61] Van der Kemp, *ubi sup.* Wagenaar, ix. 357, 358.
[62] See the paper in Meteren, 605, 606.

CHAPTER LI.

Designs of Henry IV. — New marriage project between France and Spain — Formal proposition of negotiating for a truce between the States and Spain — Exertions of Prince Maurice to counteract the designs of Barneveld — Strife between the two parties in the republic — Animosity of the people against Barneveld — Return of the Spanish commissioners — Further trifling — Dismissal of the commissioners — Close of the negotiations — Accidental discovery of the secret instructions of the archdukes to the commissioners — Opposing factions in the republic — Oration of President Jeannin before the States-General — Comparison between the Dutch and Swiss republics — Calumnies against the Advocate — Ambassador Lambert in France — Henry's letter to Prince Maurice — Reconciliation of Maurice and Barneveld — Agreement of the States to accept a truce.

PRESIDENT JEANNIN had long been prepared for this result. It was also by no means distasteful to him. A peace would not have accorded with the ulterior and secretly cherished schemes of his sovereign, and during his visit to Paris, he had succeeded in persuading Henry that a truce would be far the most advantageous solution of the question, so far as his interests were concerned.

For it had been precisely during that midsummer vacation of the President at Paris that Henry had completed his plot against the liberty of the republic, of which he professed himself the only friend. Another phase of Spanish marriage-making had excited his ever scheming and insidious brain. It had been proposed that the second son of the Spanish king should espouse one of Henry's daughters.

The papal Nuncius asked what benefit the King of Spain would receive for his share, in case of the marriage. The French king replied by plainly declaring to the Nuncius that the united States should abstain from and renounce all navigation to and commerce with the Indies, and should permit public exercise of the Catholic religion. If they refused, he

would incontinently abandon them to their fate. More than this, he said, could not honestly be expected of him.[1]

Surely this was enough. Honestly or dishonestly, what more could Spain expect of the republic's best ally, than that he should use all his efforts to bring her back into Spanish subjection, should deprive her of commerce with three-quarters of the world, and compel her to re-establish the religion which she believed, at that period, to be incompatible with her constitutional liberties? It is difficult to imagine a more profligate or heartless course than the one pursued at this juncture by Henry. Secretly, he was intriguing, upon the very soil of the Netherlands, to filch from them that splendid commerce which was the wonder of the age, which had been invented and created by Dutch navigators and men of science, which was the very foundation of their State, and without which they could not exist, in order that he might appropriate it to himself, and transfer the East India Company to France; while at Paris he was solemnly engaging himself in a partnership with their ancient and deadly enemy to rob them of their precious and nobly gained liberty. Was better proof ever afforded that God alone can protect us against those whom we trust? Who was most dangerous to the United Provinces during those memorable peace negotiations, Spain the avowed enemy, or France the friend?

The little republic had but her own sword, her own brain, and her own purse to rely upon. Elizabeth was dead, and James loved Spain better than he did the Netherlands, and quiet better than Spain. "I have told you often," said Caron, "and I say it once more, the Spaniard is lucky that he has such a peaceable king as this to deal with in England."[2]

[1] "Le nonce avait demandé au roy quel benefice recevrait de sa part le Roy d'Espagne en respect des mariages, Et pour parler plus clair le roy déclara au nonce que les Etats se deporteront de toute navigation et commerce aux Indes, et permettront quelque exercise public de la foy Catholique ès Provinces Unies, ou à faute de ce il les delaissera et abandonnera incontinent, en quoy il dit estre compris tout ce que l'on peut honnêtement prétendre de luy pour le présent."—Extract of Letter of Peckius, cited in Deventer, iii. 250.

[2] Deventer, iii. 253.

The details of the new marriage project were arranged at Paris between the Nuncius, the Spanish ambassador, Don Pedro de Toledo, the diplomatic agent of the archdukes, and Henry's ministers, precisely as if there had been no negotiations going on between the States and Spain. Yet the French king was supposed to be the nearest friend of the States, and was consulted by them on every occasion, while his most intimate and trusted counsellor, the ingenuous Jeannin, whose open brow was stamped with sincerity, was privy to all their most secret deliberations.

But the statesman thus dealing with the Hollanders under such a mask of friendly candour, knew perfectly well the reason why his Government preferred a truce to a peace. During a prolonged truce, the two royal children would grow old enough for the consummation of marriage, and the States—so it was hoped—would be corrupted and cajoled into renouncing their liberty. All the Netherlands would be then formed into a secundogeniture for Spain, and the first sovereign would be the husband of a French princess.[3] Even as an object of ambition, the prize to be secured

[3] "Et le point auquel nous travaillons maintenant est de pénétrer à quoy le Roy de France se résouldra advenant faulte de paix; et tachons de faire trouver bon à ses dits ministres qu'en ce cas il abandonne les dits Etats et empoigne le party du mariage du second fils d'Espaigne avecq l'une de ses filles aux conditions ja proposées; pour à quoy les induire sert de beaucoup de les avoir mené jusques là qu'ils confessent y avoir de la raison, equité et justice es conditions concernans la religion et la navigation aux Indes, soubs lesquelles l'on est content de quitter la souveraineté des dites provinces; ce qu'aussi le roy mesme advoua assez clérement en ma derniere audience Et sur ce a res parti qu'estans les dites conditions telles, il auroit juste occasion de s'offenser et retirer des dits Estats s'il ne s'y accomodaient, il me dit qu'il s'entendoit comme cela . . . . Et se resolvant le roy à cest abandon et delaissement des dits Estats, le dit Don Pedro m'a dit qu'il a pouvoir d'accorder en tel cas le dit mariage avecq l'investiture des Pais-Bas et aultres conditions plus fortes pour asseurer le roy qu'iceulx pays demeuront séparez de la couronne d'Espaigne Mais il semble à aulcuns des ministres qu'à faulte de paix le plus expédient sera de faire une longue trève avecq les dits Estats et cependant arrester le dit mariage et attendre le temps de consommation d'icelluy et de la lignée qui en pourra procéder Auquel cas le roy tres Chretien ne seroit seulement content d'abandonner les dits Etats, mais encore de tenir la main à les faire rejoindre aux aultres provinces de l'obeyssance de votre altesse" —Peckius to the Archduke, 18 Aug 1608, in Deventer, iii 250-252.

Two months before Peckius had written that the Duc de Sully had been feeling his pulse in regard to a truce in the Netherlands with reference to these marriage projects.—Ibid.

by so much procrastination and so much treachery was paltry.

When the Spanish commissioners came to the French and English ambassadors accordingly, complaining of the abrupt and peremptory tone of the States' reply, the suggestion of conferences for truce, in place of fruitless peace negotiations, was made at once, and of course favourably received. It was soon afterwards laid before the States-General. To this end, in truth, Richardot and his colleagues had long been secretly tending. Moreover, the subject had been thoroughly but secretly discussed long before between Jeannin and Barneveld.

The French and English ambassadors, accordingly, on the 27th August, came before the States-General, and made a formal proposition for the opening of negotiations for a truce. They advised the adoption of this course in the strongest manner. "Let the truce be made with you," they said, "as with free States, over which the king and the archdukes have no pretensions, with the understanding that, *during the time of the truce* you are to have free commerce as well to the Indies as to Spain and the obedient Netherlands, and to every part of the Spanish dominions; that you are to retain all that you possess at present, and that such other conditions are to be added as you may find it reasonable to impose. During this period of leisure you will have time to put your affairs in order, to pay your debts, and to reform your Government, and if you remain united, the truce will change into an absolute peace."[4]

Maurice was more indignant when the new scheme was brought to his notice than he had ever been before, and used more violent language in opposing a truce than he had been used to employ when striving against a peace. To be treated with, *as* with a free State, and to receive permission to trade with the outside world until the truce should expire, seemed to him a sorry result for the republic to accept.

[4] Jeannin, i 827.

The state-council declared, by way of answer to the foreign ambassadors, that the principal points and conditions which had been solemnly fixed, before the States had consented to begin the negotiations, had been disputed with infinite effrontery and shamelessness by the enemy.[5] The pure and perfect sovereignty notoriously included religion and navigation to any part of the world; and the republic would never consent to any discussion of truce unless these points were confirmed beforehand with the Spanish king's signature and seal.

28 August.

This resolution of the council—a body which stood much under the influence of the Nassaus—was adopted next day by the States-General, and duly communicated to the friendly ambassadors.[6]

The foreign commissioners, when apprised of this decision, begged for six weeks' time, in order to be able to hear from Madrid.

Even the peace party was disgusted with this impertinence. Maurice boiled over with wrath. The ambassadors recommended compliance with the proposal. Their advice was discussed in the States-General, eighty members being present, besides Maurice and Lewis William. The stadholder made a violent and indignant speech.[7]

He was justified in his vehemence. Nothing could exceed the perfidy of their great ally.

"I know that the King of France calculates thus"—wrote Aerssens at that moment from Paris—"'If the truce lasts seven years, my son will be old enough to accomplish the proposed marriage, and they will be obliged to fulfil their present offers. Otherwise, I would break the truce in the Netherlands, and my own peace with them, in order to take from the Spaniard by force what he led me to hope from alliance.' Thus it is," continued the States' envoy, "that his Majesty condescends to propose to us a truce, which may have a double interpretation, according to the disposition of the strongest, and thus our commonwealth will be kept in perpe-

[5] "Vermeetelyk en onbeschaemd." [6] Van der Kemp, iii. 160, 162. [7] Ibid. 40.

tual disquiet, without knowing whether it is sovereign or not. Nor will it be sovereign unless it shall so please our neighbour, who by this means will always keep his foot upon our throat."[8]

"To treat with the States as if they were free," said Henry to the Nuncius soon afterwards, "is not to make them free. This clause does no prejudice to the rights of the King of Spain, except for the time of the truce." Aerssens taxed the king with having said this. His Majesty flatly denied it. The republican envoy bluntly adduced the testimony of the ambassadors of Venice and of Wirtemberg. The king flew into a rage on seeing that his secrets had been divulged, and burst out with these words:—"What you demand is not reasonable. You wish the king of Spain to renounce his rights in order to arrive at a truce. You wish to dictate the law to him. If you had just gained four battles over him, you could not demand more. I have always held you for sovereigns, because I am your friend, but if you would judge by equity and justice, you are not sovereigns. It is not reasonable that the king of Spain should quit the sovereignty *for always*, and you ought to be satisfied with having it so long as the treaty shall last."[9]

Here was playing at sovereignty with a vengeance. Sovereignty was a rattle for the States to amuse themselves with, until the royal infants, French and Spanish, should be grown old enough to take the sovereignty for good. Truly this was indeed keeping the republic under the king's heel to be crushed at his pleasure, as Aerssens, with just bitterness, exclaimed.

Two days were passed at the Hague in vehement debate. The deputies of Zeeland withdrew. The deputies from Holland were divided, but, on the whole, it was agreed to listen to propositions of truce, provided the freedom of the United Provinces—not under conditions nor during a certain period, but simply and for all time—should be recognised beforehand.[10]

[8] Correspondence in Deventer, iii. 262–267. [9] Ibid. [10] Wagenaar, ix. 378–380.

It was further decided on the 14th September to wait until the end of the month for the answer from Spain.

14 Sept.

After the 1st of October it was distinctly intimated to the Spanish commissioners that they must at once leave the country unless the king had then acknowledged the absolute independence of the provinces.[11]

A suggestion which had been made by these diplomatists to prolong the actually existing armistice into a truce of seven years, a step which they professed themselves willing to take upon their own responsibility, had been scornfully rejected by the States. It was already carrying them far enough away, they said, to take them away from a peace to a truce, which was something far less secure than a peace, but the continuance of this floating, uncertain armistice would be the most dangerous insecurity of all. This would be going from firm land to slippery ice, and from slippery ice into the water. By such a process, they would have neither war nor peace—neither liberty of government nor freedom of commerce—and they unanimously refused to listen to any such schemes.[12]

During the fortnight which followed this provisional consent of the States, the prince redoubled his efforts to counteract the Barneveld party.

He was determined, so far as in him lay, that the United Netherlands should never fall back under the dominion of Spain. He had long maintained the impossibility of effecting their thorough independence except by continuing the war, and had only with reluctance acquiesced in the arguments of the French ambassadors in favour of peace negotiations. As to the truce, he vehemently assured those envoys that it was but a trap. How could the Netherlanders know who their friends might be when the truce should have expired, and under what unfavourable auspices they might not be compelled to resume hostilities ?[13]

As if he had been actually present at the council boarde

[11] Van der Kemp, ñi. 41. [12] Meteren, 606, 607. [13] Jeannin, i. 889, *seqq*

in Madrid and Valladolid, or had been reading the secret letters of Friar John to Spinola, he affirmed that the only object of Spain was to recruit her strength and improve her finances, now entirely exhausted. He believed, on the other hand, that the people of the provinces, after they should have once become accustomed to repose, would shrink from exchanging their lucrative pursuits for war, and would prefer to fall back under the yoke of Spain. During the truce they would object to the furnishing of necessary contributions for garrison expenses, and the result would be that the most important cities and strongholds, especially those on the frontier, which were mainly inhabited by Catholics, would become insecure. Being hostile to a Government which only controlled them by force, they would with difficulty be kept in check by diminished garrisons, unless they should obtain liberty of Catholic worship.[14]

It is a dismal proof of the inability of a leading mind, after half a century's war, to comprehend the true lesson of the war—that toleration of the Roman religion seemed to Maurice an entirely inadmissible idea. The prince could not rise to the height on which his illustrious father had stood; and those about him, who encouraged him in his hostility to Catholicism, denounced Barneveld and Arminius as no better than traitors and atheists. In the eyes of the extreme party, the mighty war had been waged, not to liberate human thought, but to enforce predestination; and heretics to Calvinism were as offensive in their eyes as Jews and Saracens had ever been to Torquemada.

The reasons were unanswerable for the refusal of the States to bind themselves to a foreign sovereign in regard to the interior administration of their commonwealth; but that diversity of religious worship should be considered incompatible with the health of the young republic—that the men who had so bravely fought the Spanish Inquisition should now claim their own right of inquisition into the human conscience—this was almost enough to create despair as to the

[14] Jeannin, i. 889, *seqq.*

possibility of the world's progress. The seed of intellectual advancement is slow in ripening, and it is almost invariably the case that the generation which plants—often but half conscious of the mightiness of its work—is not the generation which reaps the harvest. But all mankind at last inherits what is sown in the blood and tears of a few. That Government, whether regal or democratic, should dare to thrust itself between man and his Maker—that the State, not satisfied with interfering in a thousand superfluous ways with the freedom of individual human action in the business of life, should combine with the Church to reduce human thought to slavery in regard to the sacred interests of eternity, was one day to be esteemed a blasphemous presumption in lands which deserved to call themselves free. But that hour had not yet come.

"If the garrisons should be weakened," said the prince, "nothing could be expected from the political fidelity of the town populations in question, unless they should be allowed the exercise of their own religion. But the States could hardly be disposed to grant this voluntarily, for fear of injuring the general insecurity and violating the laws of the commonwealth, built as it is upon a foundation which cannot suffer this diversity in the public exercise of religion. Already," continued Maurice, "there are the seeds of dissension in the provinces and in the cities, sure to ripen in the idleness and repose of peace to an open division. This would give the enemy a means of intriguing with and corrupting those who are already wickedly inclined."[15]

Thus in the year 1608, the head of the Dutch republic, the son of William the Silent, seemed to express himself in favour of continuing a horrible war, not to maintain the political independence of his country, but to prevent Catholics from acquiring the right of publicly worshipping God according to the dictates of their conscience.

Yet it would be unjust to the prince, whose patriotism was as pure and unsullied as his sword, to confound his

[15] Jeannin, i. 889, *seqq.*

motives with his end. He was firmly convinced that liberty of religious worship, to be acquired during the truce, would inevitably cause the United Provinces to fall once more under the Spanish yoke. The French ambassador, with whom he conferred every day, never doubted his sincerity. Gelderland, Friesland, Overyssel, Groningen, and Utrecht, five provinces out of the united seven, the prince declared to be chiefly inhabited by Catholics. They had only entered the union, he said, because compelled by force. They could only be kept in the union by force, unless allowed freedom of religion. His inference from such a lamentable state of affairs was, not that the experiment of religious worship should be tried, but that the garrisons throughout the five provinces ought to be redoubled, and the war with Spain indefinitely waged. The President was likewise of opinion that "a revolt of these five provinces against the union might be at any moment expected, ill disposed as they were to recognise a sovereignty which abolished their religion." Being himself a Catholic, however, it was not unnatural that he should make a different deduction from that of the prince, and warmly recommend, not more garrisons, but more liberty of worship.[16]

Thus the very men who were ready to dare all, and to sacrifice all in behalf of their country, really believed themselves providing for the imperishable security of the commonwealth by placing it on the narrow basis of religious intolerance.

Maurice, not satisfied with making these vehement arguments against the truce in his conferences with the envoys of the French and British sovereigns, employed the brief interval yet to elapse before definitely breaking off or resuming the conferences with the Spanish commissioners in making vigorous appeals to the country.

"The weal or woe of the United Provinces for all time,"

[16] Thus Jeannin (i 891, 892) reported in his letters to Villeroy the prince's conversation, yet certainly the prince was erroneously or falsely quoted. — Compare Van der Kemp, iii 43

he said, "is depending on the present transactions.[17] Weigh well the reasons we urge, and make use of those which seem to you convincing. You know that the foe, according to his old deceitful manner, laid down very specious conditions at the beginning, in order to induce my lords the States-General to treat.

"If the king and the archdudes sincerely mean to relinquish absolutely their pretensions to these provinces, they can certainly have no difficulty in finding honest and convenient words to express their intention. As they are seeking other phrases than the usual and straightforward ones, they give certain proof that they mean to keep back from us the substance. They are trying to cheat us with dark, dubious, loosely-screwed terms,[18] which secure nothing and bind to nothing. If it be wise to trust the welfare of our State to ambiguous words, you can judge according to your own discretion.

"Recognition of our sovereignty is the foundation-stone of these negotiations.

"Let every man be assured that, with such mighty enemies, we can do nothing by halves. We cannot afford to retract, mutilate, or moderate our original determination. He who swerves from the straight road at the beginning is lost; he who stumbles at the first step is apt to fall down the whole staircase. If, on account of imaginable necessity, we postpone that most vital point, the assurance of our freedom, we shall very easily allow less important points to pass muster,[19] and at last come tamely into the path of reconciliation. That was exactly the danger which our ancestors in similar negotiations always feared, and against which we too have always done our best to guard ourselves.

"Wherefore, if the preservation of our beloved fatherland is dear to you, I exhort you to maintain that great fundamental resolution, at all times and against all men, even if this should

[17] The letter, dated 21 Sept. 1608, is published in full by Van der Kemp, iii. 166–174. It is less accurately given by Meteren, 606–608.

[18] "Op schroeven gestelde woorden en termen."

[19] "Geringere punkten ook wel door de monstering passeren."

cause the departure of the enemy's commissioners. What can you expect from them but evil fruit?"

He then advised all the estates and magistracies which he was addressing to instruct their deputies, at the approaching session of the States-General, to hold on to the first article of the often-cited preliminary resolution without allowing one syllable to be altered. Otherwise nothing could save the commonwealth from dire and notorious confusion. Above all, he entreated them to act in entire harmony and confidence with himself and his cousin, even as they had ever done with his illustrious father.

Certainly the prince fully deserved the confidence of the States, as well for his own signal services and chivalrous self-devotion, as for the unexampled sacrifices and achievements of William the Silent. His words had the true patriotic ring of his father's frequent and eloquent appeals; and I have not hesitated to give these extracts from his discourse, because comparatively few of such utterances of Maurice have been preserved, and because it gives a vivid impression of the condition of the republic and the state of parties at that momentous epoch. It was not merely the fate of the United Netherlands and the question of peace or war between the little republic and its hereditary enemy that were upon the issue. The peace of all Christendom, the most considerable material interests of civilization, and the highest political and moral principles that can influence human action, were involved in those negotiations.

There were not wanting many to impeach the purity of the stadholder's motives. As admiral or captain-general, he received high salaries, besides a tenth part of all prize-money gained at sea by the fleets, or of ransom and blackmail on land by the armies of the republic. His profession, his ambition, his delights, were those of a soldier. As a soldier in a great war, he was more necessary to his countrymen than he could expect to be as a statesman in time of peace. But nothing ever appeared in public or in private, which threw a reasonable suspicion upon his lofty patriotism. Peace he had

always believed to be difficult of attainment. It had now been proved impossible. A truce he honestly considered a pitfall of destruction, and he denounced it, as we have seen, in the language of energetic conviction. He never alluded to his pecuniary losses in case peace should be made. His disinterested patriotism was the frequent subject of comment in the most secret letters of the French ambassadors to the king. He had repeatedly refused enormous offers if he would forsake the cause of the republic. The King of France was ever ready to tempt him with bribes, such as had proved most efficacious with men as highly born and as highly placed as a cadet of the house of Orange-Nassau. But there is no record that Jeannin assailed him at this crisis with such temptations, although it has not been pretended that the prince was obdurate to the influence of Mammon when that deity could be openly approached.

That Maurice loved power, pelf, and war, can hardly be denied. That he had a mounting ambition; that he thought a monarchy founded upon the historical institutions and charters of the provinces might be better than the burgher-aristocracy which, under the lead of Barneveld, was establishing itself in the country; that he knew no candidate so eligible for such a throne as his father's son; all this is highly probable and scarcely surprising. But that such sentiments or aspirations caused him to swerve the ninth part of a hair from what he considered the direct path of duty; that he determined to fight out the great fight with Spain and Rome until the States were free in form, in name, and in fact, only that he might then usurp a sovereignty which would otherwise revert to Philip of Spain or be snatched by Henry of Navarre—of all this there is no proof whatever.

The language of Lewis William to the provinces under his government was quite as vigorous as the appeals of Maurice.[20]

During the brief interval remaining before the commissioners should comply with the demands of the States or take their departure, the press throughout the Netherlands was

[20] His letter is published by Van der Kemp, iii. 174–176.

most active. Pamphlets fell thick as hail. The peace party and the war party contended with each other, over all the territory of the provinces, as vigorously as the troops of Fuentes or Bucquoy had ever battled with the columns of Bax and Meetkerke. The types of Blaauw and Plantin were as effective during the brief armistice, as pike and arquebus in the field, but unfortunately they were used by Netherlanders against each other. As a matter of course, each party impeached the motives as well as the actions of its antagonist. The adherents of the Advocate accused the stadholder of desiring the continuance of the war for personal aims. They averred that six thousand men for guarding the rivers would be necessary, in addition to the forty-five thousand men, now kept constantly on foot. They placed the requisite monthly expenses, if hostilities were resumed, at 800,000 florins, while they pointed to the 27,000,000 of debt over and above the 8,000,000 due to the British crown, as a burthen under which the republic could scarcely stagger much longer.[21] Such figures seem modest enough, as the price of a war of independence.

Familiar with the gigantic budgets of our own day, we listen with something like wonder, now that two centuries and a half have passed, to the fierce denunciations by the war party of these figures as wilful fictions. Science has made in that interval such gigantic strides. The awful intellect of man may at last make war impossible for his physical strength. He can forge but cannot wield the hammer of Thor; nor has Science yet discovered the philosopher's stone. Without it, what exchequer can accept chronic warfare and escape bankruptcy? After what has been witnessed in these latest days, the sieges and battles of that distant epoch seem like the fights of pigmies and cranes. Already an eighty years' war, such as once was waged, has become inconceivable. Let two more centuries pass away, and perhaps a three weeks' campaign may exhaust an empire.[22]

Meantime the war of words continued. A proclamation

[21] Wagenaar, ix. 377.

[22] This was written in March, 1866.

with penalties was issued by the States against the epidemic plague of pamphlets or "blue-books," as those publications were called in Holland[23] but with little result.[24] It was not deemed consistent with liberty by those republicans to put chains on the press because its utterances might occasionally be distasteful to magistrates.[25] The writers, printers, and sellers of the "blue-books" remained unpunished and snapped their fingers at the placard.

We have seen the strenuous exertions of the Nassaus and their adherents by public appeals and private conversation to defeat all schemes of truce. The people were stirred by the eloquence of the two stadholders. They were stung to fury against Spain and against Barneveld by the waspish effusions of the daily press. The magistrates remained calm, and took part by considerable majorities with Barneveld. That statesman, while exercising almost autocratic influence in the estates, became more and more odious to the humbler classes, to the Nassaus, and especially to the Calvinist clergy. He was denounced as a papist, an atheist, a traitor, because striving for an honourable peace with the foe, and because admitting the possibility of more than one road to the kingdom of Heaven. To doubt the infallibility of Calvin was as heinous a crime, in the eyes of his accusers, as to kneel to the host. Peter Titelmann, half a century earlier, dripping with the blood of a thousand martyrs, seemed hardly a more loathsome object to all Netherlanders than the Advocate now appeared to his political enemies, thus daring to preach religious toleration, and boasting of humble ignorance as the safest creed.[26] Alas! we must always have something to persecute, and individual man is never so convinced of his own wisdom as when dealing with subjects beyond human comprehension.

[23] "Blaauw boekje." Was the phrase derived from the name of the great printer Blaauw?

[24] Groot Plakaat Bock, i. D. kol. 437. Wagenaar, ix. 373.

[25] "Alzo het streng onderzocken naar schryvers en verspreiden voor strydig met de vryheid aangezien en daerom gemyd werdt."—Wagenaar, ix. 373

[26] "Nil scire tutissima fides."—Device of the Olden-Barneveld family, *vide* vol. i. of this work, page 315.

Unfortunately, however, while the great Advocate was clear in his conscience he had scarcely clean hands. He had very recently accepted a present of twenty thousand florins from the King of France. That this was a bribe by which his services were to be purchased for a cause not in harmony with his own convictions it would be unjust to say. We of a later generation, who have had the advantage of looking through the portfolio of President Jeannin, and of learning the secret intentions of that diplomatist and of his master, can fully understand however that there was more than sufficient cause at the time for suspecting the purity of the great Advocate's conduct. We are perfectly aware that the secret instructions of Henry gave his plenipotentiaries almost unlimited power to buy up as many influential personages in the Netherlands as could be purchased. So they would assist in making the king master of the United Provinces at the proper moment there was scarcely any price that he was not willing to pay.

Especially Prince Maurice, his cousin, and the Advocate of Holland, were to be secured by life pensions, property, offices, and dignities, all which Jeannin might offer to an almost unlimited amount, if by such means those great personages could possibly be induced to perform the king's work.

There is no record that the president ever held out such baits at this epoch to the prince. There could never be a doubt however in any one's mind that if the political chief of the Orange-Nassau house ever wished to make himself the instrument by which France should supplant Spain in the tyranny of the Netherlands, he might always name his own price. Jeannin never insulted him with any such trading propositions. As for Barneveld, he avowed long years afterwards that he had accepted the twenty thousand florins, and that the king had expressly exacted secrecy in regard to the transaction. He declared however that the money was a reward for public services rendered by him to the French Government ten years before, in the course of his mission to

France at the time of the peace of Vervins. The reward had been promised in 1598, and the pledge was fulfilled in 1608. In accepting wages fairly earned, however, he protested that he had bound himself to no dishonourable service, and that he had never exchanged a word with Jeannin or with any man in regard to securing for Henry the sovereignty of the Netherlands.[27]

His friends moreover maintained in his defence that there were no laws in the Netherlands forbidding citizens to accept presents or pensions from foreign powers. Such an excuse was as bad as the accusation. Woe to the republic whose citizens require laws to prevent them from becoming stipendiaries of foreign potentates! If public virtue, the only foundation of republican institutions, be so far washed away that laws in this regard are necessary to save it from complete destruction, then already the republic is impossible. Many who bore illustrious names, and occupied the highest social positions at that day in France, England, and the obedient provinces, were as venal as cattle at a fair. Philip and Henry had bought them over and over again, whenever either was rich enough to purchase and strong enough to enforce the terms of sale. Bribes were taken with both hands in overflowing measure; the difficulty was only in obtaining the work for the wage.

But it would have been humiliating beyond expression had the new commonwealth, after passing through the fiery furnace of its great war, proved no purer than leading monarchies at a most corrupt epoch. It was no wonder therefore that men sought to wipe off the stain from the reputation of Barneveld, and it is at least a solace that there was no proof of his ever rendering, or ever having agreed to render, services inconsistent with his convictions as to the best interests of the commonwealth. It is sufficiently grave that he knew the colour of the king's money, and that

[27] See for this whole story of the twenty thousand florins paid to the Advocate, Van der Kemp, iii. 43, 165, 166. Brandt, Regtspleging, 87, 88. Wagenaar, ix. 367–370.

in a momentous crisis of history he accepted a reward for former professional services, and that the broker in the transaction, President Jeannin, seriously charged him by Henry's orders to keep the matter secret. It would be still more dismal if Jeannin, in his private letters, had ever intimated to Villeroy or his master that he considered it a mercantile transaction, or if any effort had ever been made by the Advocate to help Henry to the Batavian throne. This however is not the case.

In truth, neither Maurice nor Barneveld was likely to assist the French king in his intrigues against the independence of their fatherland. Both had higher objects of ambition than to become the humble and well-paid servants of a foreign potentate. The stadholder doubtless dreamed of a crown which might have been his father's, and which his own illustrious services might be supposed to have earned for himself. If that tempting prize were more likely to be gained by a continuance of the war, it is none the less certain that he considered peace, and still more truce, as fatal to the independence of the provinces.

The Advocate, on the other hand, loved his country well. Perhaps he loved power even better. To govern the city magistracies of Holland, through them the provincial estates, and through them again the States-General of the whole commonwealth; as first citizen of a republic to wield the powers of a king; as statesman, diplomatist, and financier, to create a mighty empire out of those slender and but recently emancipated provinces of Spain, was a more flattering prospect for a man of large intellect, iron will, and infinite resources, than to sink into the contemptible position of stipendiary to a foreign master. He foresaw change, growth, transformation in the existing condition of things. Those great corporations the East and West India Companies were already producing a new organism out of the political and commercial chaos which had been so long brooding over civilization. Visions of an imperial zone extending from the little Batavian island around the earth, a chain of forts and factories dotting the

newly-discovered and yet undiscovered points of vantage, on island or promontory, in every sea ; a watery, nebulous, yet most substantial empire—not fantastic, but practical—not picturesque and mediæval, but modern and lucrative—a world-wide commonwealth with a half-submerged metropolis, which should rule the ocean with its own fleets and, like Venice and Florence, job its land wars with mercenary armies—all these dreams were not the cloudy pageant of a poet but the practical schemes of a great creative mind. They were destined to become reality. Had the geographical conditions been originally more favourable than they were, had Nature been less a stepmother to the metropolis of the rising Batavian realm, the creation might have been more durable. Barneveld, and the men who acted with him, comprehended their age, and with slender materials were prepared to do great things. They did not look very far perhaps into futurity, but they saw the vast changes already taking place, and felt the throb of forces actually at work.

The days were gone when the iron-clad man on horseback conquered a kingdom with his single hand. Doubtless there is more of poetry and romance in his deeds than in the achievements of the counting-house aristocracy, the hierarchy of joint-stock corporations that was taking the lead in the world's affairs. Enlarged views of the social compact and of human liberty, as compared with those which later generations ought to take, standing upon the graves, heaped up mountains high, of their predecessors, could hardly be expected of them. But they knew how to do the work before them. They had been able to smite a foreign and sacerdotal tyranny into the dust at the expense of more blood and more treasure, and with sacrifices continued through a longer cycle of years, than had ever been recorded by history.

Thus the Advocate believed that the chief fruits of the war—political independence, religious liberty, commercial expansion—could be now secured by diplomacy, and that a truce could be so handled as to become equivalent to a peace. He required no bribes therefore to labour for that

which he believed to be for his own interests and for those of the country.

First citizen of Holland, perpetual chairman of a board of ambitious shopkeepers who purposed to dictate laws to the world from their counting-house table, with an unerring eye for the interests of the commonwealth and his own, with much vision, extraordinary eloquence, and a magnificent will, he is as good a sample of a great burgher—an imposing not a heroic figure—as the times had seen.

A vast stride had been taken in the world's progress. Even monopoly was freedom compared to the sloth and ignorance of an earlier epoch and of other lands, and although the days were still far distant when the earth was to belong to mankind, yet the modern republic was leading, half unconsciously, to a period of wider liberty of government, commerce, and above all of thought.

Meantime, the period assigned for the departure of the Spanish commissioners, unless they brought a satisfactory communication from the king, was rapidly approaching.

On the 24th September Verreyken returned from Brussels, but it was soon known that he came empty handed. He informed the French and English ambassadors 24 Sept. that the archdukes, on their own responsibility, now suggested the conclusion of a truce of seven years for Europe only. This was to be negotiated with the States-General as with free people, over whom no pretensions of authority were made, and the hope was expressed that the king would give his consent to this arrangement.

The ambassadors naturally refused to carry the message to the States. To make themselves the mouthpieces of such childish suggestions was to bring themselves and their masters into contempt. There had been trifling enough, and even Jeannin saw that the storm of indignation about to burst forth would be irresistible. There was no need of any attempt on the part of the commissioners to prolong their stay if this was the result of the fifteen days' grace which had so reluctantly been conceded to them. To express a hope

that the king might perhaps give his future approval to a proceeding for which his signed and sealed consent had been exacted as an indispensable preliminary, was carrying effrontery further than had yet been attempted in these amazing negotiations.

Prince Maurice once more addressed the cities of Holland, giving vent to his wrath in language with which there was now more sympathy than there had been before. "Verreyken has come back," he said, "not with a signature, but with a hope. The longer the enemy remains in the country the more he goes back from what he had originally promised. He is seeking for nothing more than, in this cheating way and in this pretence of waiting for the king's consent—which we have been expecting now for more than eighteen months—to continue the ruinous armistice. Thus he keeps the country in a perpetual uncertainty, the only possible consequence of which is our complete destruction. We adjure you therefore to send a resolution in conformity with our late address, in order that through these tricks and snares the fatherland may not fall into the clutch of the enemy, and thus into eternal and intolerable slavery. God save us all from such a fate!"[28]

26 Sept.

Neither Barneveld nor Jeannin attempted to struggle against the almost general indignation. The deputies of Zeeland withdrew from the assembly of the States-General, protesting that they would never appear there again so long as the Spanish commissioners remained in the country. The door was opened wide, and it was plain that those functionaries must take their departure. Pride would not allow them to ask permission of the States to remain, although they intimated to the ambassadors their intense desire to linger for ten or twelve days longer. This was obviously inadmissible, and on the 30th September they appeared before the Assembly to take leave.[29]

[28] Document given in Van der Kemp, iii. 177, 178.

[29] Meteren, 608. Grotius, xvii. 780, 781. Wagenaar, ix. 385–388. Van der Kemp, iii. 178–183.

There were but three of them, the Genoese, the Spaniard, and the Burgundian—Spinola, Mancicidor, and Richardot. Of the two Netherlanders, brother John was still in Spain, and Verreyken found it convenient that day to have a lame leg.

President Richardot, standing majestically before the States-General, with his robes wrapped around his tall, spare form, made a solemn farewell speech of mingled sorrow, pity, and the resentment of injured innocence. They had come to the Hague, he said, sent by the King of Spain and the archdukes to treat for a good and substantial peace, according to the honest intention of his Majesty and their Highnesses. To this end they had sincerely and faithfully dealt with the gentlemen deputed for that purpose by their High Mightinesses the States, doing everything they could think of to further the cause of peace. They lamented that the issue had not been such as they had hoped, notwithstanding that the king and archdukes had so far derogated from their reputation as to send their commissioners into the United Netherlands, it having been easy enough to arrange for negotiations on other soil. It had been their wish thus to prove to the world how straightforward were their intentions by not requiring the States to send deputies to them. They had accorded the first point in the negotiations, touching the free state of the country. Their High Mightinesses had taken offence upon the second, regarding the restoration of religion in the United Provinces. Thereupon the father commissary had gone to Spain, and had remained longer than was agreeable. Nevertheless, they had meantime treated of other points. Coming back at last to the point of religion, the States-General had taken a resolution, and had given them their dismissal, without being willing to hear a word more, or to make a single proposition of moderation or accommodation. 30 Sept.

He could not refrain from saying that the commissioners had been treated roughly. Their High Mightinesses had fixed the time for their dismissal more precisely than one would do

with a servant who was discharged for misconduct; for the lackey, if he asked for it, would be allowed at least a day longer to pack his trunk for the journey. They protested before God and the assembly of the States that the king and princes had meant most sincerely, and had dealt with all roundness and sincerity. They at least remained innocent of all the disasters and calamities to come from the war.

"As for myself," said Richardot, "I am no prophet, nor the son of a prophet; yet I will venture the prediction to you, my lords the States-General, that you will bitterly rue it that you did not embrace the peace thus presented, and which you might have had. The blood which is destined to flow, now that you have scorned our plan of reconciliation, will be not on our heads but your own."[30]

Barneveld replied by temperately but firmly repelling the charges brought against the States in this artful oration of the president. They had proceeded in the most straightforward manner, never permitting themselves to enter into negotiations except on the preliminary condition that their freedom should be once for all conceded and recognised. "You and you only," he continued, "are to bear the blame that peace has not been concluded; you who have not been willing or not been able to keep your promises. One might, with better reason, hold you guilty of all the bloodshed; you whose edicts, bloodier and more savage than war itself, long ago forced these provinces into the inevitable necessity of waging war; you whose cruelty, but yesterday exercised on the crews of defenceless and innocent merchantmen and fishing-vessels, has been fully exibited to the world."

Spinola's countenance betrayed much emotion as he listened to the exchange of bitter recriminations which took place on this farewell colloquy. It was obvious that the brave and accomplished soldier honestly lamented the failure of the attempt to end the war.

But the rupture was absolute. The marquis and the president dined that day with Prince Maurice, by whom they

[30] Authorities last cited.

were afterwards courteously accompanied a part of the way on their journey to Brussels.[31]

Thus ended the comedy which had lasted nearly two years. The dismal leave-taking, as the curtain fell, was not as entertaining to the public outside as the dramatic meeting between Maurice and Spinola had been at the opening scene near Ryswyk. There was no populace to throw up their hats for the departing guests. From the winter's night in which the subtle Franciscan had first stolen into the prince's cabinet down to this autumn evening, not a step of real progress could be recorded as the result of the intolerable quantity of speech-making and quill-driving. There were boat-loads of documents, protocols, and notes, drowsy and stagnant as the canals on which they were floated off towards their tombs in the various archives. Peace to the dust which we have not wantonly disturbed, believing it to be wholesome for the cause of human progress that the art of ruling the world by doing nothing, as practised some centuries since, should once and again be exhibited.

Not in vain do we listen to those long-bearded, venerable, very tedious old presidents, advocates, and friars of orders gray, in their high ruffs, taffety robes or gowns of frieze, as they squeak and gibber, for a fleeting moment, to a world which knew them not. It is something to learn that grave statesmen, kings, generals, and presidents could negotiate for two years long, and that the only result should be the distinction between a conjunction, a preposition, and an adverb. That the provinces should be held *as* free States, not *for* free States—that they should be free in similitude, not in substance—thus much and no more had been accomplished.

And now to all appearance every chance of negotiation was gone. The half-century war, after this brief breathing space, was to be renewed for another century or so, and more furiously than ever. So thought the public. So meant Prince Maurice. Richardot and Jeannin knew better.

[31] Authorities last cited.

The departure of the commissioners was recorded upon the register of the resolutions of Holland, with the ominous note: "God grant that they may not have sown evil seed here; the effects of which will one day be visible in the ruin of this commonwealth."[32]

Hardly were the backs of the commissioners turned, before the indefatigable Jeannin was ready with his scheme for repatching the rupture. He was at first anxious that the deputies of Zeeland should be summoned again, now that the country was rid of the Spaniards. Prince Maurice, however, was wrathful when the president began to talk once more of truce. The proposition, he said, was simply the expression of a wish to destroy the State. Holland and Zeeland would never agree to any such measure, and they would find means to compel the other provinces to follow their example. If there were but three or four cities in the whole country to reject the truce, he would, with their assistance alone, defend the freedom of the republic, or at least die an honourable death in its defence. This at least would be better than after a few months to become slaves of Spain. Such a result was the object of those who began this work, but he would resist it at the peril of his life.[33]

A singular incident now seemed to justify the wrath of the stadholder, and to be likely to strengthen his party.

Young Count John of Nassau happened to take possession of the apartments in Goswyn Meursken's hostelry at the Hague, just vacated by Richardot. In the drawer of a writing-table was found a document, evidently left there by the president. This paper was handed by Count John to his cousin, Frederic Henry, who at once delivered it to his brother Maurice. The prince produced it in the assembly of the States-General, members from each province were furnished with a copy of it within two or three hours, and it was soon afterwards printed and published. The document, being nothing less than the original secret instructions of

[32] Resol. Holl. 30 Sept. 1608, bl. 223. Wagenaar, ix. 388.
[33] Wagenaar, ix. 389, 390. Jeannin.

the archdukes to their commissioners, was naturally read with intense interest by the States-General, by the foreign envoys, and by the general public.[34]

It appeared, from an inspection of the paper,[35] that the commissioners had been told that, if they should find the French, English, and Danish ambassadors desirous of being present at the negotiations for the treaty, they were to exclude them from all direct participation in the proceedings. They were to do this, however, so sweetly and courteously that it would be impossible for those diplomatists to take offence, or to imagine themselves distrusted. On the contrary, the States-General were to be informed that their communication in private on the general subject with the ambassadors was approved by the archdukes, because they believed the sovereigns of France, England, and Denmark, their sincere and affectionate friends. The commissioners were instructed to domesticate themselves as much as possible with President Jeannin and to manifest the utmost confidence in his good intentions. They were to take the same course with the English envoys, but in more general terms, and were very discreetly to communicate to them whatever they already knew, and, on the other hand, carefully to conceal from them all that was still a secret.

They were distinctly told to make the point of the Catholic religion first and foremost in the negotiations ; the arguments showing the indispensable necessity of securing its public exercise in the United Provinces being drawn up with considerable detail. They were to insist that the republic should absolutely renounce the trade with the East and West Indies, and should pledge itself to chastise such of its citizens as might dare to undertake those voyages, as disturbers of the peace and enemies of the public repose, whether they went to the Indies in person or associated themselves with men of other nations for that purpose, under any pretext whatever. When these points, together with many matters of detail less difficult of adjustment, had been satisfactorily

[34] Jeannin, i. 925, *et seq.* [35] See the document itself in Jeannin, i. 51–58.

settled, the commissioners were to suggest measures of union for the common defence between the united and the obedient provinces. This matter was to be broached very gently. "In the sweetest terms possible," it was to be hinted that the whole body of the Netherlanders could protect itself against every enemy, but if dismembered, as it was about to be, neither the one portion nor the other would be safe. The commissioners were therefore to request the offer of some proposition from the States-General for the common defence. In case they remained silent, however, then the commissioners were to declare that the archdukes had no wish to speak of sovereignty over the United Provinces, however limited. "Having once given them that morsel to swallow," said their Highnesses, "we have nothing of the kind in our thoughts. But if they reflect, it is possible that they may see fit to take us for protectors."

The scheme was to be managed with great discreetness and delicacy, and accomplished by hook or by crook, if the means could be found. "You need not be scrupulous as to the form or law of protection, provided the name of protector can be obtained," continued the archdukes.

At least the greatest pains were to be taken that the two sections of the Netherlands might remain friends. "We are in great danger unless we rely upon each other," it was urged. "But touch this chord very gently, lest the French and English hearing of it suspect some design to injure them. At least we may each mutually agree to chastise such of our respective subjects as may venture to make any alliance with the enemies of the other."

It was much disputed whether these instructions had been left purposely or by accident in the table-drawer. Jeannin could not make up his mind whether it was a trick or not, and the vociferous lamentations of Richardot upon his misfortunes made little impression upon his mind. He had small confidence in any austerity of principle on the part of his former fellow-leaguer that would prevent him from leaving the document by stealth, and then protesting that he

had been foully wronged by its coming to light. On the whole, he was inclined to think, however, that the paper had been stolen from him.[36]

Barneveld, after much inquiry, was convinced that it had been left in the drawer by accident.[37]

Richardot himself manifested rage and dismay when he found that a paper, left by chance in his lodgings, had been published by the States. Such a proceeding was a violation, he exclaimed, of the laws of hospitality. With equal justice, he declared it to be an offence against the religious respect due to ambassadors, whose persons and property were sacred in foreign countries. "Decency required the States," he said, "to send the document back to him, instead of showing it as a trophy, and he was ready to die of shame and vexation at the unlucky incident."[38]

Few honourable men will disagree with him in these complaints, although many contemporaries obstinately refused to believe that the crafty and experienced diplomatist could have so carelessly left about his most important archives. He was generally thought by those who had most dealt with him, to prefer, on principle, a crooked path to a straight one. "'Tis a mischievous old monkey," said Villeroy on another occasion, "that likes always to turn its tail instead of going directly to the purpose."[39] The archduke, however, was very indulgent to his plenipotentiary. "My good master," said the president, "so soon as he learned the loss of that accursed paper, benignantly consoled, instead of chastising me; and, after having looked over the draught, was glad that the accident had happened; for thus his sincerity had been proved, and those who sought profit by the trick had been confounded."[40] On the other hand, what good could it do to the cause of peace, that these wonderful instructions should be published throughout the republic? They might almost seem a fiction, invented by the war party to inspire a general disgust for any further negotiation. Every loyal

[36] Jeannin, i. 914, 919, 925. [37] Ibid. 919. [38] Ibid. 924.
[39] Ibid. ii. 129. [40] Ibid. 21.

Netherlanders would necessarily be qualmish at the word peace, now that the whole design of the Spanish party was disclosed.

The public exercise of the Roman religion was now known to be the indispensable condition—first, last, and always—to any possible peace. Every citizen of the republic was to be whipped out of the East and West Indies, should he dare to show his face in those regions. The States-General, while swallowing the crumb of sovereignty vouchsafed by the archdukes, were to accept them as protectors, in order not to fall a prey to the enemies whom they imagined to be their friends.

What could be more hopeless than such negotiations? What more dreary than the perpetual efforts of two lines to approach each other which were mathematically incapable of meeting? That the young republic, conscious of her daily growing strength, should now seek refuge from her nobly won independence in the protectorate of Albert, who was himself the vassal of Philip, was an idea almost inconceivable to the Dutch mind. Yet so impossible was it for the archdukes to put themselves into human relations with this new and popular Government, that in the inmost recesses of their breasts they actually believed themselves, when making the offer, to be performing a noble act of Christian charity.

The efforts of Jeannin and of the English ambassador were now unremitting, and thoroughly seconded by Barneveld. Maurice was almost at daggers drawn, not only with the Advocate but with the foreign envoys. Sir Ralph Winwood, who had, in virtue of the old treaty arrangements with England, a seat in the state-council at the Hague, and who was a man of a somewhat rough and insolent deportment, took occasion at a session of that body, when the prince was present, to urge the necessity of at once resuming the ruptured negotiations. The King of Great Britain, he said, only recommended a course which he was himself always ready to pursue. Hostilities which were necessary, and no others,

were just. Such, and such only, could be favoured by God or by pious kings. But wars were not necessary which could be honourably avoided. A truce was not to be despised, by which religious liberty and commerce were secured, and it was not the part of wisdom to plunge into all the horrors of immediate war in order to escape distant and problematical dangers, that might arise when the truce should come to an end. If a truce were now made, the kings of both France and England would be guarantees for its faithful observance. They would take care that no wrong or affront was offered to the States-General.[41]

Maurice replied, with a sneer, to these sententious commonplaces derived at second-hand from King James that great kings were often very indifferent to injuries sustained by their friends. Moreover, there was an eminent sovereign, he continued, who was even very patient under affronts directly offered to himself. It was not very long since a horrible plot had been discovered to murder the King of England, with his wife, his children, and all the great personages of the realm. That this great crime had been attempted under the immediate instigation of the King of Spain was notorious to the whole world, and certainly no secret to King James. Yet his Britannic Majesty had made haste to exonerate the great criminal from all complicity in the crime; and had ever since been fawning upon the Catholic king, and hankering for a family alliance with him. Conduct like this the prince denounced in plain terms as cringing and cowardly, and expressed the opinion that guarantees of Dutch independence from such a monarch could hardly be thought very valuable.

These were terrible words for the representative of James to have hurled in his face in full council by the foremost personage of the republic. Winwood fell into a furious passion, and of course there was a violent scene, with much subsequent protesting and protocolling.

[41] Wagenaar, ix. 408, 409. Grotius, xvii. 785. Van der Kemp, iii. 48. Jeannin.

The British king insisted that the prince should make public amends for the insult, and Maurice firmly refused to do anything of the kind. The matter was subsequently arranged by some amicable concessions made by the prince in a private letter to James, but there remained for the time a state of alienation between England and the republic, at which the French sincerely rejoiced. The incident, however, sufficiently shows the point of exasperation which the prince had reached, for, although choleric, he was a reasonable man, and it was only because the whole course of the negotiations had offended his sense of honour and of right that he had at last been driven quite beyond the bounds of self-control.[42]

13 Oct. On the 13th of October, the envoys of France, England, Denmark, and of the Elector Palatine, the Elector of Brandeburg, and other German princes, came before the States-General.

Jeannin, in the name of all these foreign ministers, made a speech warmly recommending the truce."[43]

He repelled the insinuation that the measure proposed had been brought about by the artifices of the enemy, and was therefore odious. On the contrary, it was originated by himself and the other good friends of the republic.

In his opinion, the terms of the suggested truce contained sufficient guarantees for the liberty of the provinces, not only during the truce, but for ever.

No stronger recognition of their independence could be expected than the one given. It was entirely without example, argued the president, that in similar changes brought about by force of arms, sovereigns after having been despoiled of their states have been compelled to abandon their rights shamefully by a public confession, unless they had absolutely fallen into the hands of their enemies and were completely at their mercy. "Yet the princes who made this great concession," continued Jeannin, "are not lying vanquished at

[42] Jeannin, ii. 303, 304, and authorities last cited. Winwood, ii. 353, 354.
[43] See the text in Jeannin, ii. 3–8.

your feet, nor reduced by dire necessity to yield what they have yielded."

He reminded the assembly that the Swiss enjoyed at that moment their liberty in virtue of a simple truce, without ever having obtained from their former sovereign a declaration such as was now offered to the United Provinces.

The president argued, moreover, with much force and acuteness that it was beneath the dignity of the States, and inconsistent with their consciousness of strength, to lay so much stress on the phraseology by which their liberty was recognised. That freedom had been won by the sword, and would be maintained against all the world by the sword.

"In truth," said the orator, "you do wrong to your liberty by calling it so often in doubt, and in claiming with so much contentious anxiety from your enemies a title-deed for your independence. You hold it by your own public decree. In virtue of that decree, confirmed by the success of your arms, you have enjoyed it long. Nor could anything obtained from your enemies be of use to you if those same arms with which you gained your liberty could not still preserve it for you."

Therefore, in the opinion of the president, this persistence in demanding a more explicit and unlimited recognition of independence was only a pretext for continuing the war, ingeniously used by those who hated peace.

Addressing himself more particularly to the celebrated circular letter of Prince Maurice against the truce, the president maintained that the liberty of the republic was as much acknowledged in the proposed articles as if the words "for ever" had been added. "To acknowledge liberty is an act which, by its very nature, admits of no conditions," he observed, with considerable force.[44]

The president proceeded to say that in the original negotiations the qualifications obtained had seemed to him enough. As there was an ardent desire, however, on the part of many for a more explicit phraseology, as something

[44] Ecrit fait par Monsieur Jeannin, 13 Oct. 1608. Text in Jeannin, ii. 8–19.

necessary to the public safety, he had thought it worth attempting.

"We all rejoiced when you obtained it," continued Jeannin, "but not when they agreed to renounce the names, titles, and arms of the United Provinces; for that seemed to us shameful for them beyond all example. That princes should make concessions so entirely unworthy of their grandeur, excited at once our suspicion, for we could not imagine the cause of an offer so specious. We have since found out the reason." [45]

The archdukes being unable, accordingly, to obtain for the truce those specious conditions which Spain had originally pretended to yield, it was the opinion of the old diplomatist that the king should be permitted to wear the paste substitutes about which so many idle words had been wasted.

It would be better, he thought, for the States to be contented with what was precious and substantial, and not to lose the occasion of making a good treaty of truce, which was sure to be converted with time into an absolute peace.

"It is certain," he said, "that the princes with whom you are treating will never go to law with you to get an exposition of the article in question. After the truce has expired, they will go to war with you if you like, but they will not trouble themselves to declare whether they are fighting you as rebels or as enemies, nor will it very much signify. If their arms are successful, they will give you no explanations. If you are the conquerors, they will receive none. The fortune of war will be the supreme judge to decide the dispute, not the words of a treaty. Those words are always interpreted to the disadvantage of the weak and the vanquished, although they may be so perfectly clear that no man could doubt them; never to the prejudice of those who have proved the validity of their rights by the strength of their arms." [46]

This honest, straightforward cynicism, coming from the lips of one of the most experienced diplomatists of Europe, was difficult to gainsay. Speaking as one having authority,

[45] Jeannin, ii. 8–19. [46] Ibid.

the president told the States-General in full assembly, that there was no law in Christendom, as between nations, but the good old fist-law, the code of brute force.

Two centuries and a half have rolled by since that oration was pronounced, and the world has made immense progress in science during that period. But there is still room for improvement in this regard in the law of nations. Certainly there is now a little more reluctance to come so nakedly before the world. But has the cause of modesty or humanity gained very much by the decorous fig-leaves of modern diplomacy ?

The president alluded also to the ungrounded fears that bribery and corruption would be able to effect much, during the truce, towards the reduction of the provinces under their repudiated sovereign. After all, it was difficult to buy up a whole people. In a commonwealth, where the People was sovereign, and the persons of the magistrates ever changing, those little comfortable commercial operations could not be managed so easily as in civilized realms like France and England. The old Leaguer thought with pensive regret, no doubt, of the hard, but still profitable bargains by which the Guises and Mayennes and Mercœurs, and a few hundred of their noble adherents, had been brought over to the cause of the king. He sighed at the more recent memories of the Marquis de Rosny's embassy in England, and his largess scattered broadcast among the great English lords. It would be of little use he foresaw—although the instructions of Henry were in his portfolio, giving him almost unlimited powers to buy up everybody in the Netherlands that could be bought—to attempt that kind of traffic on a large scale in the Netherlands.

Those republicans were greedy enough about the navigation to the East and West Indies, and were very litigious about the claim of Spain to put up railings around the ocean as her private lake, but they were less keen than were their more polished contemporaries for the trade in human souls.

"When we consider," said Jeannin, "the constitution of

your State, and that to corrupt a few people among you does no good at all, because the frequent change of magistracies takes away the means of gaining over many of them at the same time, capable by a long duration of their power to conduct an intrigue against the commonwealth, this fear must appear wholly vain."[47]

And then the old Leaguer, who had always refused bribes himself, although he had negotiated much bribery of others, warmed into sincere eloquence as he spoke of the simple virtues on which the little republic, as should be the case with all republics, was founded. He did homage to the Dutch love of liberty.

"Remember," he said, "the love of liberty which is engraved in the hearts of all your inhabitants, and that there are few persons now living who were born in the days of the ancient subjection, or who have not been nourished and brought up for so long a time in liberty that they have a horror for the very name of servitude. You will then feel that there is not one man in your commonwealth who would wish or dare to open his mouth to bring you back to subjection, without being in danger of instant punishment as a traitor to his country."[48]

He again reminded his hearers that the Swiss had concluded a long and perilous war with their ancient masters by a simple truce, during which they had established so good a government that they were never more attacked. Honest republican principles, and readiness at any moment to defend dearly won liberties, had combined with geographical advantages to secure the national independence of Switzerland.[49]

Jeannin paid full tribute to the maritime supremacy of the republic.

"You may have as much good fortune," he said, "as the Swiss, if you are wise. You have the ocean at your side, great navigable rivers enclosing you in every direction, a multitude of ships, with sailors, pilots, and seafaring men of

[47] Jeannin, ii. 8–19. [48] Ibid. [49] Ibid.

every description, who are the very best soldiers in battles at sea to be found in Christendom. With these you will preserve your military vigour and your habits of navigation, the long voyages to which you are accustomed continuing as usual. And such is the kind of soldiers you require. As for auxiliaries, should you need them you know where to find them."[50]

The president implored the States-General accordingly to pay no attention to the writings which were circulated among the people to prejudice them against the truce.

This was aimed directly at the stadholder, who had been making so many direct personal appeals to the people, and who was now the more incensed, recognising the taunt of the president as an arrow taken from Barneveld's quiver. There had long ceased to be any communication between the Prince and the Advocate, and Maurice made no secret of his bitter animosity both to Barneveld and to Jeannin.

He hesitated on no occasion to denounce the Advocate as travelling straight on the road to Spain, and although he was not aware of the twenty thousand florins recently presented by the French king, he had accustomed himself, with the enormous exaggeration of party spirit, to look upon the first statesman of his country and of Europe as a traitor to the republic and a tool of the archdukes. As we look back upon those passionate days, we cannot but be appalled at the depths to which theological hatred could descend.

On the very morning after the session of the assembly in which Jeannin had been making his great speech, and denouncing the practice of secret and incendiary publication, three remarkable letters were found on the doorstep of a house in the Hague. One was addressed to the States-General, another to the States of Holland, and a third to the burgomaster of Amsterdam. In all these documents, the Advocate was denounced as an infamous traitor, who was secretly intriguing to bring about a truce for the purpose of handing over the commonwealth to the enemy. A shameful death, it was added, would be his fitting reward.[51]

14 Oct.

[50] Jeannin, ii. 8-19. [51] Wagenaar, ix. 411, 412. Van der Kemp, iii. 51, 52.

Thse letters were read in the Assembly of the States-General, and created great wrath among the friends of Barneveld. Even Maurice expressed indignation, and favoured a search for the anonymous author, in order that he might be severely punished.

It seems strange enough that anonymous letters picked up in the street should have been deemed a worthy theme of discussion before their High Mightinesses the States-General. Moreover, it was raining pamphlets and libels against Barneveld and his supporters every day, and the stories which grave burghers and pious elders went about telling to each other, and to everybody who would listen to them, about the Advocate's depravity, were wonderful to hear.

At the end of September, just before the Spanish commissioners left the Hague, a sledge of the kind used in the Dutch cities as drays stopped before Barneveld's front-door one fine morning, and deposited several large baskets, filled with money, sent by the envoys for defraying certain expenses of forage, hire of servants, and the like, incurred by them during their sojourn at the Hague, and disbursed by the States. The sledge, with its contents, was at once sent by order of the Advocate, under guidance of Commissary John Spronsen, to the Receiver-General of the republic.[52]

Yet men wagged their beards dismally as they whispered this fresh proof of Barneveld's venality. As if Spinola and his colleagues were such blunderers in bribing as to send bushel baskets full of Spanish dollars on a sledge, in broad daylight, to the house of a great statesman whom they meant to purchase, expecting doubtless a receipt in full to be brought back by the drayman! Well might the Advocate say at a later moment, in the bitterness of his spirit, that his enemies, not satisfied with piercing his heart with their false, injurious and honour-filching libels and stories, were determined to break it. "He begged God Almighty," he said, "to be merciful to him, and to judge righteously between him and them."[53]

[52] Van der Kemp, iii. 54, 229, 230. [53] Ibid. 229.

Party spirit has rarely run higher in any commonwealth than in Holland during these memorable debates concerning a truce. Yet the leaders both of the war party and the truce party were doubtless pure, determined patriots, seeking their country's good with all their souls and strength.

Maurice answered the discourse of Jeannin by a second and very elaborate letter. In this circular, addressed to the magistracies of Holland, he urged his countrymen once more with arguments already employed by him, and in more strenuous language than ever, to beware of a truce even more than of a peace, and warned them not to swerve by a hair's breadth from the formula in regard to the sovereignty agreed upon at the very beginning of the negotiations.[54] To this document was appended a paper of considerations, drawn up by Maurice and Lewis William, in refutation, point by point, of all the arguments of President Jeannin in his late discourse. 21 Oct.

It is not necessary to do more than allude to these documents, which were marked by the close reasoning and fiery spirit which characterized all the appeals of the prince and his cousin at this period, because the time had now come which comes to all controversies when argument is exhausted and either action or compromise begins.

Meantime, Barneveld, stung almost to madness by the poisonous though ephemeral libels which buzzed so perpetually about him, had at last resolved to retire from the public service. He had been so steadily denounced as being burthensome to his superiors in birth by the power which he had acquired, and to have shot up so far above the heads of his equals, that he felt disposed to withdraw from a field where his presence was becoming odious.

His enemies, of course, considered this determination a trick by which he merely wished to prove to the country how indispensable he was, and to gain a fresh lease of his almost unlimited power by the alarm which his proposed abdication would produce. Certainly, however, if it were a

[54] Jeannin, ii. 25-33, gives the text.

trick, and he were not indispensable, it was easy enough to prove it and to punish him by taking him at his word.

On the morning after the anonymous letters had been found in the street he came into the House of Assembly and made a short speech. He spoke simply of his thirty-one years of service, during which he believed himself to have done his best for the good of the fatherland and for the welfare of the house of Nassau. He had been ready thus to go on to the end, but he saw himself environed by enemies, and felt that his usefulness had been destroyed. He wished, therefore, in the interest of the country, not from any fear for himself, to withdraw from the storm, and for a time at least to remain in retirement. The displeasure and hatred of the great were nothing new to him, he said. He had never shrunk from peril when he could serve his fatherland; for against all calumnies and all accidents he had worn the armour of a quiet conscience. But he now saw that the truce, in itself an unpleasant affair, was made still more odious by the hatred felt towards him. He begged the provinces, therefore, to select another servant less hated than himself to provide for the public welfare.[55]

Having said these few words with the dignity which was natural to him he calmly walked out of the Assembly House.[56]

The personal friends of Barneveld and the whole truce party were in consternation. Even the enemies of the Advocate shrank appalled at the prospect of losing the services of the foremost statesman of the commonwealth at this critical juncture. There was a brief and animated discussion as soon as his back was turned. Its result was the appointment of a committee of five to wait upon Barneveld and solemnly to request him to reconsider his decision. Their efforts were successful. After a satisfactory interview with the committee he resumed his functions with greater authority than ever.[57] Of course there were not wanting many to

[55] Wagenaar, ix. 411, 412. Van der Kemp, iii. 51, 52. [56] Ibid. [57] Ibid.

whisper that the whole proceeding had been a comedy, and that Barneveld would have been more embarrassed than he had ever been in his life had his resignation been seriously accepted. But this is easy to say, and is always said, whenever a statesman who feels himself aggrieved, yet knows himself useful, lays down his office. The Advocate had been the mark of unceasing and infamous calumnies. He had incurred the deadly hatred of the highest placed, the most powerful, and the most popular man in the commonwealth. He had more than once been obliged to listen to opprobrious language from the prince, and it was even whispered that he had been threatened with personal violence. That Maurice was perpetually denouncing him in public and private, as a traitor, a papist, a Spanish partisan, was notorious. He had just been held up to the States of the union and of his own province by unknown voices as a criminal worthy of death. Was it to be wondered at that a man of sixty, who had passed his youth, manhood, and old age in the service of the republic, and was recognised by all as the ablest, the most experienced, the most indefatigable of her statesmen, should be seriously desirous of abandoning an office which might well seem to him rather a pillory than a post of honour?

"As for neighbour Barneveld," said recorder Aerssens,[58] little dreaming of the foul witness he was to bear against that neighbour at a terrible moment to come, "I do what I can and wish to help him with my blood. He is more courageous than I. I should have sunk long ago, had I been obliged to stand against such tempests. The Lord God will, I hope, help him and direct his understanding for the good of all Christendom, and for his own honour. If he can steer this ship into a safe harbour we ought to raise a golden statue of him. I should like to contribute my mite to it. He deserves twice as much honour, despite all his enemies, of whom he has many rather from envy than from reason. May

[58] Aerssens and the Advocate were next door neighbours in the Spui straat, at the Hague. Deventer, iii. 271.

the Lord keep him in health, or it will go hardly with us all."[59]

Thus spoke some of his grateful countrymen when the Advocate was contending at a momentous crisis with storms threatening to overwhelm the republic. Alas! where is the golden statue?

He believed that the truce was the most advantageous measure that the country could adopt. He believed this with quite as much sincerity as Maurice held to his conviction that war was the only policy. In the secret letter of the French ambassador there is not a trace of suspicion as to his fidelity to the commonwealth, not the shadow of proof of the ridiculous accusation that he wished to reduce the provinces to the dominion of Spain. Jeannin, who had no motive for concealment in his confidential correspondence with his sovereign, always rendered unequivocal homage to the purity and patriotism of the Advocate and the Prince.

He returned to the States-General and to the discharge of his functions as Advocate-General of Holland. His policy for the time was destined to be triumphant, his influence more extensive than ever. But the end of these calumnies and anonymous charges was not yet.

Meantime the opposition to the truce was confined to the States of Zeeland and two cities of Holland.[60] Those cities were very important ones, Amsterdam and Delft, but they were already wavering in their opposition. Zeeland stoutly maintained that the treaty of Utrecht forbade a decision of the question of peace and war except by a unanimous vote of the whole confederacy. The other five provinces and the friends of the truce began with great vehemence to declare that the question at issue was now changed. It was no longer to be decided whether there should be truce or war with Spain, but whether a single member of the confederacy could dictate its law to the other six States. Zeeland, on her part, talked loudly of seceding from the union, and

[59] Aerssens to Van der Veecken, 7 Nov. 1608. In Deventer, iii. 272.
[60] Wagenaar, ix. 414.

setting up for an independent, sovereign commonwealth.[61] She would hardly have been a very powerful one, with her half-dozen cities, one prelate, one nobleman, her hundred thousand burghers at most, bustling and warlike as they were, and her few thousand mariners, although the most terrible fighting men that had ever sailed on blue water. She was destined ere long to abandon her doughty resolution of leaving her sister provinces to their fate.

Maurice had not slackened in his opposition to the truce, despite the renewed vigour with which Barneveld pressed the measure since his return to the public councils. The prince was firmly convinced that the kings of France and England would assist the republic in the war with Spain so soon as it should be renewed. His policy had been therefore to force the hand of those sovereigns, especially that of Henry, and to induce him to send more stringent instructions to Jeannin than those with which he believed him to be furnished. He had accordingly despatched a secret emissary to the French king, supplied with confidential and explicit instructions. This agent was a Captain Lambert. Whether it was "Pretty Lambert," "Dandy Lambert" — the vice-admiral who had so much distinguished himself at the great victory of Gibraltar—does not distinctly appear. If it were so, that hard-hitting mariner would seem to have gone into action with the French Government as energetically as he had done eighteen months before, when, as master of the Tiger, he laid himself aboard the Spanish admiral and helped send the St. Augustine to the bottom. He seemed indisposed to mince matters in diplomacy. He intimated to the king and his ministers that Jeannin and his colleagues were pushing the truce at the Hague much further and faster than his Majesty could possibly approve, and that they were obviously exceeding their instructions. Jeannin, who was formerly so much honoured and cherished throughout the republic, was now looked upon askance because of his intimacy with Barneveld

[61] Wagenaar, ix 416 "Zo ver liep de twist dat de Zeeuwen spraaken van zich te willen af zonderen van de overigen.

and his partisans.[62] He assured the king that nearly all the cities of Holland, and the whole of Zeeland, were entirely agreed with Maurice, who would rather die than consent to the proposed truce.[63] The other provinces, added Lambert, would be obliged, will ye nill ye, to receive the law from Holland and Zeeland. Maurice, without assistance from France or any other power, would give Spain and the archdukes as much exercise as they could take for the next fifty years before he would give up, and had declared that he would rather die sword in hand than basely betray his country by consenting to such a truce.[64] As for Barneveld, he was already discovering the blunders which he had made, and was trying to curry favour with Maurice.[65] Barneveld and both the Aerssens were traitors to the State, had become the objects of general hatred and contempt, and were in great danger of losing their lives, or at least of being expelled from office.[66]

Here was altogether too much zeal on the part of Pretty Lambert; a quality which, not for the first time, was thus proved to be less useful in diplomatic conferences than in a sea-fight. Maurice was obliged to disavow his envoy, and to declare that his secret instructions had never authorized him to hold such language. But the mischief was done. The combustion in the French cabinet was terrible. The Dutch admiral had thrown hot shot into the powder-magazine of his friends, and had done no more good by such tactics than might be supposed. Such diplomacy was denounced as a mere mixture of "indiscretion and impudence."[67] Henry was very wroth, and forthwith indited an imperious letter to his cousin Maurice.[68]

[62] Jeannin, i 932.

[63] Ibid 932, 933, and ii. 49.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid

[66] Ibid Compare for this mission of Lambert, Wagenaar, ix. 384, 385; Van der Kemp, iii. 57, 232

[67] Jeannin, i 932 Every one of these amazing assertions of "the gentle ambassador Lambert" were denounced by Jeannin in his letters to Villeroy as impudent falsehoods. Especially in regard to the pretended vaunt of Maurice, that he could carry on the war fifty years if France would only remain neutral, the president said that he had been expressly informed by the prince that without the assistance of France the republic was lost for ever —Jeannin, ii. 45–51.

[68] The letter is given in Jeannin, ii. 58–64

"Lambert's talk to me by your orders," said the king, "has not less astonished than scandalized me. I now learn the new resolution which you have taken, and I observe that you have begun to entertain suspicions as to my will and my counsels on account of the proposition of truce." 23 Oct.

Henry's standing orders to Jeannin, as we know, were to offer Maurice a pension of almost unlimited amount, together with ample rewards to all such of his adherents as could be purchased, provided they would bring about the incorporation of the United Provinces into France.[69] He was therefore full of indignation that the purity of his intentions and the sincerity of his wish for the independence of the republic could be called in question.

"People have dared to maliciously invent," he continued, "that I am the enemy of the repose and the liberty of the United Provinces, and that I was afraid lest they should acquire the freedom which had been offered them by their enemies, because I derived a profit from their war, and intended in time to deprive them of their liberty. Yet these falsehoods and jealousies have not been contradicted by you nor by anyone else, although you know that the proofs of my sincerity and good faith have been entirely without reproach or example. You knew what was said, written, and published everywhere, and I confess that when I knew this malice, and that you had not taken offence at it, I was much amazed and very malcontent."

Queen Elizabeth, in her most waspish moods, had not often lectured the States-General more roundly than Henry now lectured his cousin Maurice.

The king once more alluded to the secret emissary's violent talk, which had so much excited his indignation.

"If by weakness and want of means," he said, "you are forced to abandon to your enemies one portion of your country in order to defend the other—as Lambert tells me you are resolved to do, rather than agree to the truce without recognition of your sovereignty for ever—I pray you to con-

[69] Jeannin, i. 43, 62, 63, 69, 70, 71.

sider how many accidents and reproaches may befal you. Do you suppose that any ally of the States, or of your family, would risk his reputation and his realms in such a game, which would seem to be rather begun in passion and despair than required by reason or necessity ?"

Here certainly was plain speaking enough, and Maurice could no longer expect the king for his partner, should he decide to risk once more the bloody hazard of the die.

But Henry was determined to leave no shade of doubt on the subject.

"Lambert tells me," he said, "that you would rather perish with arms in your hands than fall shamefully into inevitable ruin by accepting truce. I have been and am of a contrary opinion. Perhaps I am mistaken, not knowing as well as you do the constitution of your country and the wishes of your people. But I know the general affairs of Christendom better than you do, and I can therefore judge more soundly on the whole matter than you can, and I know that the truce, established and guaranteed as proposed, will bring you more happiness than you can derive from war."

Thus the king, in the sweeping, slashing way with which he could handle an argument as well as a sword, strode forward in conscious strength, cutting down right and left all opposition to his will. He was determined, once for all, to show the stadholder and his adherents that the friendship of a great king was not to be had by a little republic on easy terms, nor every day. Above all, the Prince of Nassau was not to send a loud-talking, free and easy Dutch sea-captain to dictate terms to the King of France and Navarre. "Lambert tells me"—and Maurice might well wish that Pretty Lambert had been sunk in the bay of Gibraltar, Tiger and all, before he had been sent on this diplomatic errand—"Lambert tells me," continued his Majesty, "that you and the States-General would rather that I should remain neutral, and let you make war in your own fashion, than that I should do anything more to push on this truce. My cousin, it would be very easy for me, and perhaps more advantageous

for me and my kingdom than you think, if I could give you this satisfaction, whatever might be the result. If I chose to follow this counsel, I am, thanks be to God, in such condition, that I have no neighbour who is not as much in need of me as I can be of him, and who is not glad to seek for and to preserve my friendship. If they should all conspire against me moreover, I can by myself, and with no assistance but heaven's, which never failed me yet, wrestle with them altogether, and fling them all, as some of my royal predecessors have done. Know then, that I do not favour war nor truce for the United Provinces because of any need I may have of the one or the other for the defence of my own sceptre. The counsels and the succours, which you have so largely received from me, were given because of my consideration for the good of the States, and of yourself in particular, whom I have always favoured and cherished, as I have done others of your house on many occasions."

The king concluded his lecture by saying, that after his ambassadors had fulfilled their promise, and had spoken the last word of their master at the Hague, he should leave Maurice and the States to do as they liked.

"But I desire," he said, "that you and the States should not do that wrong to yourselves or to me as to doubt the integrity of my counsels nor the actions of my ambassadors. I am an honest man and a prince of my word, and not ignorant of the things of this world. Neither the States nor you, with your adherents, can permit my honour to be compromised without tarnishing your own, and without being branded for ingratitude. I say not this in order to reproach you for the past nor to make you despair of the future, but to defend the truth. I expect, therefore, that you will not fall into this fault, knowing you as I do. I pay more heed to what you said in your letter than in all Lambert's fine talk, and you will find out that nobody wishes your prosperity and that of the States more sincerely than I do, or can be more useful to you than I can."[70]

[70] I have abbreviated this remarkable letter, but of course the text of the passages cited is literally given.

There could be but little doubt in the mind of Prince Maurice, after this letter had been well pondered, that Barneveld had won the game, and that the peace party had triumphed.

To resume the war, with the French king not merely neutral but angry and covertly hostile, and with the sovereign of Great Britain an almost open enemy in the garb of an ally, might well seem a desperate course.

And Maurice, although strongly opposed to the truce, and confident in his opinions at this crisis, was not a desperado.

He saw at once the necessity of dismounting from the high horse upon which, it must be confessed, he had been inclined for more rough-riding of late than the situation warranted. Peace was unattainable, war was impossible, truce was inevitable ; Barneveld was master of the field.

The prince acquiesced in the result which the letter from the French king so plainly indicated. He was, however, more incensed than ever against Barneveld ; for he felt himself not only checkmated but humiliated by the Advocate, and believed him a traitor, who was selling the republic to Spain. It was long since the two had exchanged a word.

Maurice now declared, on more than one occasion, that it was useless for him any longer to attempt opposition to the policy of truce. The States must travel on the road which they had chosen, but it should not be under his guidance, and he renounced all responsibility for the issue.

Dreading disunion, however, more than ought else that could befal the republic, he now did his best to bring about the return of Zeeland to the federal councils. He was successful.[71] The deputies from that province reappeared in the States-General on the 11th November. They were still earnest, however, in their opposition to the truce, and warmly maintained, in obedience to instructions, that the Union of Utrecht forbade the conclusion of a treaty except by unanimous consent of the Seven Provinces. They were very fierce in their remonstrances, and again talked loudly of secession.

Van der Kemp, iii. 58. Jeannin.

After consultation with Barneveld, the French envoys now thought it their duty to take the recalcitrant Zeelanders in hand; Maurice having, as it were, withdrawn from the contest.

On the 18th November, accordingly, Jeannin once more came very solemnly before the States-General, accompanied by his diplomatic colleagues.[72] 18 Nov.

He showed the impossibility of any arrangement, except by the submission of Zeeland to a vote of the majority. "It is certain," he said, "that six provinces will never be willing to be conquered by a single one, nor permit her to assert that, according to a fundamental law of the commonwealth, her dissent can prevent the others from forming a definite conclusion.

"It is not for us," continued the president, "who are strangers in your republic, to interpret your laws, but common sense teaches us that, if such a law exist, it could only have been made in order to forbid a surrender.

"If any one wishes to expound it otherwise, to him we would reply, in the words of an ancient Roman, who said of a law which seemed to him pernicious, that at least the tablet upon which it was inscribed, if it could not be destroyed, should be hidden out of sight. Thus at least the citizens might escape observing it, when it was plain that it would cause detriment to the republic, and they might then put in its place the most ancient of all laws, *salus populi suprema lex.*"

The president, having suggested this ingenious expedient of the antique Roman for getting rid of a constitutional provision by hiding the statute-book, proceeded to give very practical reasons for setting up the supreme law of the people's safety on this occasion. And, certainly, that magnificent common-place, which has saved and ruined so many States, the most effective weapon in the political arsenal, whether wielded by tyrants or champions of freedom, was

[72] The speech of the president is given in full in his "Negotiations."—Jeannin, ii. 106–112.

not unreasonably recommended at this crisis to the States in their contest with the refractory Zeelanders. It was easy to talk big, but after all it would be difficult for that doughty little sandbank, notwithstanding the indomitable energy which it had so often shown by land and sea, to do battle by itself with the whole Spanish empire. Nor was it quite consistent with republican principles that the other six provinces should be plunged once more into war, when they had agreed to accept peace and independence instead, only that Zeeland should have its way.

The orator went on to show the absurdity, in his opinion, of permitting one province to continue the war, when all seven united had not the means to do it without the assistance of their allies. He pointed out, too, the immense blunders that would be made, should it be thought that the Kings of France and England were so much interested in saving the provinces from perdition as to feel obliged in any event to render them assistance.

"Beware of committing an irreparable fault," he said, "on so insecure a foundation. You are deceiving yourselves. And, in order that there may be no doubt on the subject, we declare to you by express command that if your adversaries refuse the truce, according to the articles presented to you by us, it is the intention of our kings to assist you with armies and subsidies, not only as during the past, but more powerfully than before. If, on the contrary, the rupture comes from your side, and you despise the advice they are giving you, you have no succour to expect from them. The refusal of conditions so honourable and advantageous to your commonwealth will render the war a useless one, and they are determined to do nothing to bring the reproach upon themselves."

The president then intimated, not without adroitness, that the republic was placing herself in a proud position by accepting the truce, and that Spain was abasing herself by giving her consent to it. The world was surprised that the States should hesitate at all.[73]

[73] Jeannin, *ubi sup.*

There was much more of scholastic dissertation in the president's address, but enough has been given to show its very peremptory character.

If the war was to go on it was to be waged mainly by Zeeland alone. This was now plain beyond all peradventure. The other provinces had resolved to accept the proposed treaty. The cities of Delft and Amsterdam, which had stood out so long among the estates of Holland, soon renounced their opposition. Prince Maurice, with praiseworthy patriotism, reconciled himself with the inevitable, and now that the great majority had spoken, began to use his influence with the factious minority.

On the day after Jeannin's speech he made a visit to the French ambassadors. After there had been some little discussion among them, Barneveld made his appearance. His visit seemed an accidental one, but it had been previously arranged with the envoys.[74]

The general conversation went on a little longer, when the Advocate, frankly turning to the Prince, spoke of the pain which he felt at the schism between them. He defended himself with honest warmth against the rumours circulated, in which he was accused of being a Spanish partisan. His whole life had been spent in fighting Spain, and he was now more determined than ever in his hostility to that monarchy. He sincerely believed that by the truce now proposed all the solid advantages of the war would be secured, and that such a result was a triumphant one for the republic. He was also most desirous of being restored to the friendship and good opinion of the house of Nassau; having proved during his whole life his sincere attachment to their interests—a sentiment never more lively in his breast than at that moment.[75]

This advance was graciously met by the stadholder, and the two distinguished personages were, for the time at least, reconciled.[76]

[74] Van der Kemp, iii. 59, 60. Compare Wagenaar, ix. 422, 423.
[75] Van der Kemp. Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* [76] Ibid.

It was further debated as to the number of troops that it would be advisable for the States to maintain during the truce, and Barneveld expressed his decided opinion that thirty thousand men, at least, would be required. This opinion gave the prince at least as much pleasure as did the personal devotion expressed by the Advocate, and he now stated his intention of working with the peace party.

The great result was now certain. Delft and Amsterdam withdrew from their opposition to the treaty, so that Holland was unanimous before the year closed ; Zeeland, yielding to the influence of Maurice, likewise gave in her adhesion to the truce.

The details of the mode in which the final arrangement was made are not especially interesting. The discussion was fairly at an end. The subject had been picked to the bones. It was agreed that the French ambassadors should go over the frontier, and hold a preliminary interview with the Spanish commissioners at Antwerp.

The armistice was to be continued by brief and repeated renewals, until it should be superseded by the truce of years.

Meantime, Archduke Albert sent his father confessor, Inigo Brizuela, to Spain, in order to make the treaty proposed by Jeannin palatable to the king.[77]

The priest was to set forth to Philip, as only a ghostly confessor could do with full effect, that he need not trouble himself about the recognition by the proposed treaty of the independence of the United Provinces. Ambiguous words had been purposely made use of in this regard, he was to explain, so that not only the foreign ambassadors were of opinion that the rights of Spain were not curtailed, but the emptiness of the imaginary recognition of Dutch freedom had been proved by the sharp criticism of the States.

It is true that Richardot, in the name of the archduke, had three months before promised the consent of the king, as having already been obtained. But Richardot knew very

[77] Wagenaar, ix. 425, 426. Jeannin.

well when he made the statement that it was false. The archduke, in subsequent correspondence with the ambassadors in December, repeated the pledge. Yet, not only had the king not given that consent, but he had expressly refused it by a courier sent in November.[78]

Philip, now convinced by Brother Inigo that while agreeing to treat with the States-General as with a free commonwealth, over which he pretended to no authority, he really meant that he was dealing with vassals over whom his authority was to be resumed when it suited his convenience, at last gave his consent to the proposed treaty. The royal decision was, however, kept for a time concealed, in order that the States might become more malleable.[79]

[78] Documents in Deventer, iii. 273.

[79] Wagenaar, ix. 425, 426. Jeannin. The reasoning was quite in accordance with the views of the French court. "Maintenant la caption est tout claire," wrote Aerssens, "en ce qu'ils refusent d'ôter le mot comme. Et ajoutent nos amis, que cette clause a esté conçue ainsi douteusement par M. Janin, pour au bout des dix ans réserver au roy de nous déclarer libres ou non selon que le Roy d'Espagne luy tiendra parole sur les mariages."—Deventer, iii. 275. "If a peace it prove," wrote Cornwallis from Madrid, "such are the difficulties as for my own part I should think it like the peace of God which passeth all understanding."—Winwood, ii. 387.

CHAPTER LII.

Vote of the States-General on the groundwork of the treaty — Meeting of the plenipotentiaries for arrangement of the truce — Signing of the twelve years' truce — Its purport — The negotiations concluded — Ratification by the States-General, the Archdukes, and the King of Spain — Question of toleration —Appeal of President Jeannin on behalf of the Catholics — Religious liberty the fruit of the war — Internal arrangements of the States under the rule of peace — Deaths of John Duke of Cleves and Jacob Arminius — Doctrines of Arminius and Gomarus — Theological warfare — Twenty years' truce between the Turkish and Roman empires — Ferdinand of Styria — Religious peace — Prospects of the future.

ON the 11th January, 1609, the States-General decided by unanimous vote that the first point in the treaty should be not otherwise fixed than thus : —

"That the archdukes—to superfluity—declare, as well in their own name as in that of the King of Spain, their willingness to treat with the lords States of the United Provinces in the capacity of, and as holding them for, free countries, provinces, and states, over which they have no claim, and that they are making a treaty with them in those said names and qualities."[1]

It was also resolved not to permit that any ecclesiastical or secular matters, conflicting with the above-mentioned freedom, should be proposed ; nor that any delay should be sought for, by reason of the India navigation or any other point.

In case anything to the contrary should be attempted by the king or the archdukes, and the deliberations protracted in consequence more than eight days, it was further decided by unanimous vote that the negotiations should at once be broken off, and the war forthwith renewed, with the help, if

[1] Wagenaar, ix. 429, 430.

possible, of the kings, princes, and states, friends of the good cause.[2]

This vigorous vote was entirely the work of Barneveld, the man whom his enemies dared to denounce as the partisan of Spain, and to hold up as a traitor deserving of death. It was entirely within his knowledge that a considerable party in the provinces had grown so weary of the war, and so much alarmed at the prospect of the negotiations for truce coming to nought, as to be ready to go into a treaty without a recognition of the independence of the States. This base faction was thought to be instigated by the English Government, intriguing secretly with President Richardot. The Advocate, acting in full sympathy with Jeannin, frustrated the effects of the manœuvre by obtaining all the votes of Holland and Zeeland for this supreme resolution. The other five provinces dared to make no further effort in that direction against the two controlling states of the republic.

It was now agreed that the French and English ambassadors should delay going to Antwerp until informed of the arrival in that city of Spinola and his colleagues ; and that they should then proceed thither, taking with them the main points of the treaty, as laid down by themselves, and accepted with slight alterations by the States.[3]

When the Spanish commissioners had signed these points the plenipotentiaries were to come to Antwerp in order to settle other matters of less vital import. Meantime, the States-General were to be summoned to assemble in Bergen-op-Zoom, that they might be ready to deal with difficulties, should any arise.[4]

The first meeting took place on the 10th February, 1609. The first objection to the draught was made by the Spaniards. It was about words and wind. They liked not the title of high and puissant lords[5] which was given to the States-General, and they proposed to turn

10 Feb.

[2] Wagenaar, ix. 429, 430.
[3] Ibid. 431. Jeannin.
[4] Ibid. Jeannin. Grotius, xviii.
[5] Wagenaar, ix. 132. "Hoogmogende herren," "Hauts et puissants seigneurs."

the difficulty by abstaining from giving any qualifications whatever, either to the archdukes or the republican authorities. The States refused to lower these ensigns of their new-born power. It was, however, at last agreed that, instead of high and mighty, they should be called illustrious and serene.[6]

This point being comfortably adjusted, the next and most important one was accepted by the Spaniards. The independence of the States was recognised according to the prescribed form. Then came the great bone of contention, over which there had been such persistent wrangling—the India trade.

The Spanish Government had almost registered a vow in heaven that the word India should not be mentioned in the treaty. It was no less certain that India was stamped upon the very heart of the republic, and could not be torn from it while life remained. The subtle diplomatists now invented a phrase in which the word should not appear, while the thing itself should be granted. The Spaniards, after much altercation, at last consented.[7]

By the end of February, most of the plenipotentiaries thought it safe to request the appearance of the States-General at Bergen-op-Zoom.[8]

Jeannin, not altogether satisfied, however, with the language of the Spaniards in regard to India, raised doubts as to the propriety of issuing the summons. Putting on his most reverend and artless expression of countenance, he assured Richardot that he had just received a despatch from the Hague, to the effect that the India point would, in all probability, cause the States at that very moment to break off the negotiations.[9] It was surely premature, therefore, to invite them to Bergen. The despatch from the Hague was a neat fiction on the part of the president, but it worked

[6] Wagenaar, ix. 432.

[7] "Huic additamento Hispanici valde reluctabantur tum quod Indiam non minus quam si nominaretur claris indiciis exprimeret," &c.—Grotius, xviii. 808, 809.

[8] Wagenaar, ix. 432, 433, 434. Jeannin, vol. ii. Resol. Holl. 4 March, 1609.

[9] Jeannin, ii. 383.

admirably. The other president, himself quite as ready at inventions as Jeannin could possibly be, was nevertheless taken in; the two ex-leaguers being, on the whole, fully a match for each other in the art of intrigue. Richardot, somewhat alarmed, insisted that the States should send their plenipotentiaries to Antwerp as soon as possible. He would answer for it that they would not go away again without settling upon the treaty.[10] The commissioners were forbidden, by express order from Spain, to name the Indies in writing, but they would solemnly declare, by word of mouth, that the States should have full liberty to trade to those countries; the King of Spain having no intention of interfering with such traffic during the period of the truce.[11]

The commissioners came to Antwerp. The States-General assembled at Bergen. On the 9th April, 1609, the truce for twelve years was signed. This was its purport:—

The preamble recited that the most serene princes and archdukes, Albert and Isabella Clara Eugenia, had made, on the 24th April, 1607, a truce and cessation of arms for eight months with the illustrious lords the States-General of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, in quality of, and as holding them for, states, provinces, and free countries, over which they pretended to nothing; which truce was ratified by his Catholic Majesty, as to that which concerned him, by letters patent of 18th September, 1607; and that, moreover, a special power had been given to the archdukes on the 10th January, 1608, to enable them in the king's name as well as their own to do everything that they might think proper to bring about a peace or a truce of many years.

It then briefly recited the rupture of the negotiations for peace, and the subsequent proposition, originated by the foreign ambassadors, to renew the conference for the purpose of concluding a truce. The articles of the treaty thus agreed upon were:—

That the archdukes declared, as well in their own name as that of the king, that they were content to treat with the

[10] Jeannin, ii. 383. [11] Winwood, ii. 489.

lords the States-General of the United Provinces in quality of, and as holding them for, countries, provinces, and free states, over which they pretended to nothing, and to make with them a truce on certain following conditions—to wit:—

That the truce should be good, firm, loyal, inviolable, and for the term of twelve years, during which time there was to be cessation of all acts of hostility between the king, archdukes, and States-General, as well by sea and other waters as by land, in all their kingdoms, countries, lands, and lordships, and for all their subjects and inhabitants of whatever quality and condition, without exception of places or of persons;

That each party should remain seized of their respective possessions, and be not troubled therein by the other party during the truce;

That the subjects and inhabitants of the respective countries should preserve amity and good correspondence during the truce, without referring to past offences, and should freely and securely entertain communication and traffic with each other by land and sea. This provision, however, was to be expressly understood as limited by the king to the kingdoms and countries possessed by him in Europe, and in other places and seas where the subjects of other kings and princes, his friends and allies, have amicable traffic. In regard, however, to places, cities, ports, and harbours which he possessed outside of those limits, the States and their subjects were to exercise no traffic, without express permission of the king. They could, however, if they chose, trade with the countries of all other princes, potentates, and peoples who were willing to permit it, even outside those limits, without any hindrance by the king;

That the truce should begin in regard to those distant countries after a year from date, unless actual notification could be sooner served there on those concerned;

That the subjects of the United Provinces should have the same liberty and privilege within the States of the king and archdukes as had been accorded to the subjects of the

King of Great Britain, according to the last treaty made with that sovereign ;

That letters of marque and reprisal should not be granted during the truce, except for special cause, and in cases permitted by the laws and imperial constitutions, and according to the rules therein prescribed ;

That those who had retired into neutral territory during the war were also to enjoy the benefit of the truce, and could reside wherever they liked without being deprived of their property ;

That the treaty should be ratified by the archdukes and the States-General within four days. As to the ratification of the king, the archdukes were bound to deliver it in good and due form within three months, in order that the lords the States-General, their subjects and inhabitants, might enjoy effectively the fruits of the treaty;

That the treaty should be published everywhere immediately after the ratification of the archdukes and States-General.

This document was signed by the ambassadors of the Kings of France and Great Britain, as mediators, and then by the deputies of the archdukes, and afterwards by those of the lords the States-General.[12]

There were thirty-eight articles in all, but the chief provisions have been indicated. The other clauses, relating to boundaries, confiscations, regulations of duties, frontier fortifications, the estates of the Nassau family, and other sequestrated property, have no abiding interest.

There was also a secret and special treaty which was demanded of the King of Spain by the States-General, and by him accorded.

This secret treaty consisted of a single clause. That clause was made up of a brief preamble and of a promise. The preamble recited textually article fourth of the public treaty relative to the India trade. The promise was to this effect.[13]

[12] See the treaty in full in Jeannin. ii. 446–457. Compare Meteren, 613.
[13] The text of the second treaty is given in Jeannin, ii. 457, 458.

For the period of the truce the Spanish commissioners pledged the faith of the king and of his successors that his Majesty would cause no impediment, whether by sea or land, to the States nor their subjects, in the traffic that thereafter might be made in the countries of all princes, potentates, and peoples who might permit the same, in whatever place it might be, even without the limits designated, and everywhere else, nor similarly to those carrying on such traffic with them, and that the king and his successors would faithfully carry into effect everything thus laid down, so that the said traffic should be free and secure, consenting even, in order that the clause might be the more authentic, that it should be considered as inserted in the principal treaty, and as making part thereof.[14]

It will be perceived that the first article of all, and the last or secret article, contained the whole marrow of the treaty. It may be well understood, therefore, with what wry faces the Spanish plenipotentiaries ultimately signed the document.

After two years and a quarter of dreary negotiation, the republic had carried all its points, without swerving a hair's breadth from the principles laid down in the beginning. The only concession made was that the treaty was for a truce of twelve years, and not for peace. But as after all, in those days, an interval of twelve years might be almost considered an eternity of peace, and as calling a peace perpetual can never make it so, the difference was rather one of phraseology than of fact.

On the other hand, the States had extorted from their former sovereign a recognition of their independence.

They had secured the India trade.

They had not conceded Catholic worship.

Mankind were amazed at this result—an event hitherto unknown in history. When before had a sovereign acknowledged the independence of his rebellious subjects, and signed a treaty with them as with equals? When before had Spain,

[14] Jeannin, ii. 457, 458.

expressly or by implication, admitted that the East and West Indies were not her private property, and that navigators to those regions, from other countries than her own, were not to be chastised as trespassers and freebooters ?

Yet the liberty of the Netherlands was acknowledged in terms which convinced the world that it was thenceforth an established fact. And India was as plainly expressed by the omission of the word, as if it had been engrossed in large capitals in Article IV.[15]

The King's Government might seek solace in syntax. They might triumph in Cardinal Bentivoglio's subtleties, and persuade themselves that to treat with the republic *as* a free nation was not to hold it *for* a free nation then and for ever. But the whole world knew that the republic really was free, and that it had treated, face to face, with its former sovereign, exactly as the Kings of France or Great Britain, or the Grand Turk, might treat with him. The new commonwealth had taken its place among the nations of the earth. Other princes and potentates made not the slightest difficulty in recognising it for an independent power and entering into treaties and alliances with it as with any other realm.

To the republic the substantial blessing of liberty : to his Catholic Majesty the grammatical quirk. When the twelve years should expire, Spain might reconquer the United Provinces if she could ; relying upon the great truth that an adverb was not a preposition. And France or Great Britain might attempt the same thing if either felt strong enough for the purpose. Did as plausible a pretext as that ever fail to a state ambitious of absorbing its neighbours ?

Jeannin was right enough in urging that this famous

[15] The words too of the certificate signed by the ambassadors of France and England were very explicit :— "Certifion aussi les députés des archiducs avoir consenty et accordé tout, ainsi que les sieurs estats et leurs sujets ne pourront trafiquer aux ports, lieux et places que tiennent les dits sieurs estats ès dites Indes si ce n'est avec leur permission. Et outre ce que les députés des dits sieurs ont déclaré plusieurs fois en notre présence et des députés des archiducs, si on entreprend sur leurs amis et allies ès dits pays qu'ils entendent les secourir et assister sans qu'on puisse prétendre la trefve estre enfreinte et violée à cette occasion."—Anvers, 9 Avril, 1609. Négotiations de Jeannin, ii. 458, 459.

clause of recognition ought to satisfy both parties. If the United Provinces, he said, happened not to have the best muskets and cannons on their side when it should once more come to blows, small help would they derive from verbal bulwarks and advantages in the text of treaties.[16]

Richardot consoled himself with his quibbles ; for quibbles were his daily bread. "Thank God our truce is made," said he, "and we have only lost the sovereignty for twelve years, if after that we have the means or the will to resume the war—whatever Don Pedro de Toledo may say." [17]

Barneveld, on his part, was devoutly and soberly pleased with the result. "To-day we have concluded our negotiations for the truce," he wrote to Aerssens. "We must pray to the Lord God, and we must do our highest duty that our work may redound to his honour and glory, and to the nation's welfare. It is certain that men will make their criticisms upon it according to their humours. But those who love their country, and all honest people who know the condition of the land, will say that it is well done." [18]

Thus modestly, religiously, and sincerely spoke a statesman, who felt that he had accomplished a great work, and that he had indeed brought the commonwealth through the tempest at last.

The republic had secured the India trade. On this point the negotiators had taken refuge in that most useful figure of speech for hard-pressed diplomatists and law-makers—the ellipsis. They had left out the word India, and his Catholic Majesty might persuade himself that by such omission a hemisphere had actually been taken away from the Dutch merchants and navigators. But the whole world saw that Article IV. really contained both the East and West Indies. It hardly needed the secret clause to make assurance doubly sure.

President Richardot was facetiously wont to observe that this point in the treaty was so obscure that he did not understand it himself.[19] But he knew better. He under-

[16] Bentivoglio, 576. [17] Deventer, iii. 308. [18] Ibid. 309. [19] Bentivoglio, 576.

stood it very well. The world understood it very well. The United Provinces had throughout the negotiations ridiculde the idea of being excluded from any part of the old world or the new by reason of the Borgian grant. All the commissioners knew that the war would be renewed if any attempt were to be seriously made to put up those famous railings around the ocean, of which the Dutch diplomatists spoke in such bitter scorn. The Spanish plenipotentiaries, therefore, had insisted that the word itself should be left out, and that the republic should be forbidden access to territories subject to the crown of Spain.

So the Hollanders were thenceforth to deal directly with the kings of Sumatra and the Moluccas, and the republics of Banda, and all the rich commonwealths and principalities of nutmegs, cloves, and indigo, unless, as grew every day more improbable, the Spaniards and Portuguese could exclude them from that traffic by main force. And the Orange flag of the republic was to float with equal facility over all America, from the Isle of Manhattan to the shores of Brazil and the Straits of Magellan, provided Philip had not ships and soldiers to vindicate with the sword that sovereignty which Spanish swords and Spanish genius had once acquired.

As for the Catholic worship, the future was to prove that liberty for the old religion and for all forms of religion was a blessing more surely to flow from the enlightened public sentiment of a free people emerging out of the most tremendous war for liberty ever waged, than from the stipulations of a treaty with a foreign power.

It was characteristic enough of the parties engaged in the great political drama that the republic now requested from France and Great Britain a written recognition of its independence, and that both France and England refused.[20]

It was strange that the new commonwealth, in the very moment of extorting her freedom from the ancient tyranny, should be so unconscious of her strength as to think free papers from neutral powers a boon. As if the sign-manual

[20] Wagenaar, ix. 445. Jeannin, vol. ii.

of James and Henry were a better guarantee than the trophies of the Nassaus, of Heemskerk, of Matelieff, and of Olden-Barneveld !

It was not strange that the two sovereigns should decline the proposition ; for we well know the secret aspirations of each, and it was natural that they should be unwilling to sign a formal quit-claim, however improbable it might be that those dreams should ever become a reality.

Both powers, however, united in a guarantee of the truce. This was signed on the 17th June, and stipulated that, without their knowledge and consent, the States should make no treaty during the period of truce with the King of Spain or the archdukes. On the other hand, in case of an infraction of the truce by the enemy, the two kings agreed to lend assistance to the States in the manner provided by the treaties concluded with the republic previously to the negotiation of the truce.[21]

17 June, 1609.

The treaty had been at once ratified by the States-General, assembled for the purpose with an extraordinary number of deputies at Bergen-op-Zoom. It was also ratified without delay by the archdukes. The delivery of the confirmation by his Catholic Majesty had been promised within three months after the signatures of the plenipotentiaries.

It would however have been altogether inconsistent with the dignity and the traditions of the Spanish court to fulfil this stipulation. It was not to be expected that "I the King" could be written either by the monarch himself, or by his *alter ego* the Duke of Lerma, in so short a time as a quarter of a year.

Several weeks accordingly went by after the expiration of the stated period. The ratification did not come, and the Netherlanders began to be once more indignant. Before the storm had risen very high, however, the despatches arrived. The king's signature was ante-dated 7th April, being thus brought within the term of three months, and was a thorough confirmation of what had been done by his plenipotentiaries.

[21] Jeannin, ii 536, 538. Wagenaar, ix. 446.

His Majesty, however, expressed a hope that during the truce the States would treat their Catholic subjects with kindness.[22]

Certainly no exception could be taken to so reasonable an intimation as this. President Jeannin, too, just before his departure, handed in to the States-General an eloquent appeal on behalf of the Catholics of the Netherlands; a paper which was not immediately made public.[23]

"Consider the great number of Catholics," he said, "in your territory, both in the cities and the country. Remember that they have worked with you, spent their property, have been exposed to the same dangers, and have always kept their fidelity to the commonwealth inviolate as long as the war endured, never complaining that they did not enjoy liberty of religious worship, believing that you had thus ordained because the public safety required such guaranty. But they always promised themselves, should the end of the war be happy, and should you be placed in the enjoyment of entire freedom, that they too would have some part in this good fortune, even as they had been sharers in the inconveniences, the expenses, and the perils of the war.

"But those cannot be said to share in any enjoyment from whom has been taken the power of serving God according to the religion in which they were brought up. On the contrary, no slavery is more intolerable nor more exasperates the mind than such restraint. You know this well, my lords States; you know too that it was the principal, the most puissant cause that made you fly to arms and scorn all dangers, in order to effect your deliverance from this servitude. You know that it has excited similar movements in various parts of Christendom, and even in the kingdom of France, with such fortunate success everywhere as to make it appear that God had so willed it, in order to prove that religion ought to be taught and inspired by the movements which come from the Holy Ghost, and not by the force of man. Thus kings

[22] Meteren, xxx. 579vo. Wagenaar, ix. 467.
[23] Jeannin, ii. 589–597, gives the whole text of his address on this occasion.

and princes should be induced by the evils and ruin which they and their subjects have suffered from this cause, as by a sentiment of their own interest, to take more care than has hitherto been taken to practise in good earnest those remedies which were wont to be used at a time when the church was in its greatest piety, in order to correct the abuses and errors which the corruption of mankind had tried to introduce as being the true and sole means of uniting all Christians in one and the same creed."

Surely the world had made progress in these forty years of war. Was it not something to gain for humanity, for intellectual advancement, for liberty of thought, for the true interests of religion, that a Roman Catholic, an ex-leaguer, a trusted representative of the immediate successor of Charles IX. and Henry III., could stand up on the blood-stained soil of the Netherlands and plead for liberty of conscience for all mankind ?

"Those cannot be said to share in any enjoyment from whom has been taken the power of serving God according to the religion in which they have been brought up. No slavery is more intolerable nor more exasperating to the mind than such restraint."

Most true, O excellent president ! No axiom in mathematics is more certain than this simple statement. To prove its truth William the Silent had lived and died. To prove it a falsehood, emperors, and kings, and priests, had issued bans, and curses, and damnable decrees. To root it out they had butchered, drowned, shot, strangled, poisoned, tortured, roasted alive, buried alive, starved, and driven mad, thousands and tens of thousands of their fellow creatures. And behold there had been almost a century of this work, and yet the great truth was not rooted out after all ; and the devil-worshippers, who had sought at the outset of the great war to establish the Holy Inquisition in the Netherlands upon the ruins of religious and political liberty, were overthrown at last and driven back into the pit. It was progress ; it was worth all the blood and treasure which had been spilled,

that, instead of the Holy Inquisition, there was now holy liberty of thought.

That there should have been a party, that there should have been an individual here and there, after the great victory was won, to oppose the doctrine which the Catholic president now so nobly advocated, would be enough to cause every believer in progress to hide his face in the dust, did we not know that the march of events was destined to trample such opposition out of existence, and had not history proved to us that the great lesson of the war was not to be rendered nought by the efforts of a few fanatics. Religious liberty was the ripened and consummate fruit, and it could not but be gathered.

"Consider too," continued the president, "how much injury your refusal, if you give it, will cause to those of your religion in the places where they are the weakest, and where they are every day imploring with tears and lamentations the grace of those Catholic sovereigns to whom they are subject, to enable them to enjoy the same religious liberty which our king is now demanding in favour of the Catholics among you. Do not cause it to come again into the minds of those sovereigns and their peoples, whom an inconsiderate zeal has often driven into violence and ferocity against protestants, that a war to compel the weakest to follow the religion of the strongest is just and lawful."

Had not something been gained for the world when this language was held by a Catholic on the very spot where less than a half century before the whole population of the Netherlands, men, women, and children, had been condemned to death by a foreign tyrant, for the simple reason that it was just, legal, and a Christian duty to punish the weak for refusing to follow the religion of the strong?

"As for the perils which some affect to fear," said Jeannin, further, "if this liberty of worship is accorded, experience teaches us every day that diversity of religion is not the cause of the ruin of states, and that a government does not cease to be good, nor its subjects to live in peace and friend-

ship with one another, rendering due obedience to the laws and to their rulers as well as if they had all been of the same religion, without having another thought, save for the preservation of the dignity and grandeur of the state in which God had caused them to be born. The danger is not in the permission, but in the prohibition of religious liberty."

All this seems commonplace enough to us on the western side of the Atlantic, in the middle of the nineteenth century, but it would have been rank blasphemy in New England in the middle of the seventeenth, many years after Jeannin spoke. It was a horrible sound, too, in the ears of some of his audience.

To the pretence so often urged by the Catholic persecutors, and now set up by their Calvinistic imitators, that those who still clung to the old religion were at liberty to depart from the land, the president replied with dignified scorn.

"With what justice," he asked, "can you drive into exile people who have committed no offence, and who have helped to conquer the very country from which you would now banish them? If you do drive them away, you will make solitudes in your commonwealth, which will be the cause of evils such as I prefer that you should reflect upon without my declaring them now. Although these reasons," he continued, "would seem sufficient to induce you to accord the free and public exercise of the Catholic religion, the king, not hoping as much as that, because aware that you are not disposed to go so far, is content to request only this grace in behalf of the Catholics, that you will tolerate them, and suffer them to have some exercise of their religion within their own households, without interference or inquiry on that account, and without execution of the rigorous decrees heretofore enforced against them."

Certainly if such wholesome, moderate, and modest counsels as these had been rejected, it would have been sound doctrine to proclaim that the world did not move. And there were individuals enough, even an influential party, prepared to oppose them for both technical and practical reasons. And

the cause of intolerance derived much warmth and comfort at this juncture from that great luminary of theology and political philosophy, the King of Great Britain. Direful and solemn were the warnings uttered by James to the republic against permitting the old religion, or any religion save his own religion, to obtain the slightest foothold within her borders.

"Let the religion be taught and preached in its purity throughout your provinces without the least mixture," said Sir Ralph Winwood, in the name of his sovereign.

"On this foundation the justice of your cause is built. There is but one verity. Those who are willing to tolerate any religion, whatever it may be, and try to make you believe that liberty for both is necessary in your commonwealth, are paving the way towards atheism."[24]

Such were the counsels of King James to the united States of the Netherlands against harbouring Catholics. A few years later he was casting forth Calvinists from his own dominions as if they had been lepers; and they went forth on their weary pilgrimage to the howling wilderness of North America, those exiled Calvinists, to build a greater republic than had ever been dreamed of before on this planet; and they went forth, not to preach, but in their turn to denounce toleration and to hang heretics. "He who would tolerate another religion that his own may be tolerated, would if need be, hang God's bible at the devil's girdle." So spoke an early Massachusetts pilgrim, in the very spirit, almost the very words of the royal persecutor, who had driven him into outer darkness beyond the seas. He had not learned the lesson of the mighty movement in which he was a pioneer, any more than Gomarus or Uytenbogaart had comprehended why the Dutch republic had risen.

Yet the founders of the two commonwealths, the United States of the seventeenth and of the nineteenth centuries, although many of them fiercely intolerant, through a natural instinct of resistance, not only to the oppressor but to the

[24] Cited in Van der Kemp, iii. 264.

creed of the oppressor, had been breaking out the way, not to atheism, as King James believed, but to the only garden in which Christianity can perennially flourish—religious liberty.

Those most ardent and zealous path-finders may be forgiven, in view of the inestimable benefits conferred by them upon humanity, that they did not travel on their own road. It should be sufficient for us, if we make due use of their great imperishable work ourselves ; and if we never cease rendering thanks to the Omnipotent, that there is at least one great nation on the globe where the words toleration and dissenter have no meaning whatever.

For the Dutch fanatics of the reformed church, at the moment of the truce, to attempt to reverse the course of events, and to shut off the mighty movement of the great revolt from its destined expanse, was as hopeless a dream as to drive back the Rhine, as it reached the ocean, into the narrow channel of the Rheinwald glacier whence it sprang.

The republic became the refuge for the oppressed of all nations, where Jews and Gentiles, Catholics, Calvinists, and Anabaptists prayed after their own manner to the same God and Father. It was too much, however, to hope that passions which had been so fiercely bubbling during fifty years would subside at once, and that the most intense religious hatreds that ever existed would exhale with the proclamation of truce. The march of humanity is rarely rapid enough to keep pace with the leaders in its most sublime movements, and it often happens that its chieftains are dwarfed in the estimation of the contemporaneous vulgar, by the very distance at which they precede their unconscious followers. But even if the progress of the human mind towards the truth is fated to be a spiral one, as if to remind us that mankind is of the earth, earthy—a worm in the dust while inhabiting this lower sphere—it is at least a consolation to reflect upon the gradual advancement of the intellect from age to age.

The spirit of Torquemada, of Charles, of Philip, of Titelmann, is even now not extinct on this globe, but there are

counter forces at work, which must ultimately blast it into insignificance. At the moment of the great truce, that evil spirit was not exorcised from the human breast, but the number of its victims and the intensity of its influence had already miraculously diminished.

The truce was made and announced all over the Netherlands by the ringing of bells, the happy discharge of innocent artillery, by illuminations, by Te Deums in all the churches. Papist and Presbyterian fell on their knees in every grand cathedral or humblest village church, to thank God that what had seemed the eternal butchery was over. The inhabitants of the united and of the obedient Netherlands rushed across the frontiers into a fraternal embrace, like the meeting of many waters when the flood-gates are lifted. It was pity that the foreign sovereignty, established at Brussels, could not then and there have been for ever swept away, and self-government and beneficent union extended over all the seventeen Netherlands, Walloon and Flemish, Catholic and reformed. But it hardly needs a word to show that the course of events had created a deeper chasm between the two sections than the gravest physical catastrophe could have produced. The opposing cliffs which religious hatred had rent asunder, and between which it seemed destined to flow for ever, seemed very close, and yet eternally separated.

The great war had established the republic, and apparently doomed the obedient Netherlands to perpetual servitude.

There were many details of minor importance to be settled between the various governments involved in these great transactions; but this history draws to its predestined close, and it is necessary to glide rapidly over matters which rather belong to a later epoch than the one now under consideration.

The treaty between the republic and the government of Great Britain, according to which each was to assist the other in case of war with four thousand troops and twenty ships of war, was confirmed in the treaty of truce. The debt of

the United Provinces to the Crown of England was definitely reckoned at 8,184,080 florins, and it was settled by the truce that 200,000 florins should be paid semi-annually, to begin with the year 1611, until the whole debt should be discharged.[25]

The army establishment of the republic was fixed during the truce at thirty thousand infantry and three thousand horse. This was a reduction from the war footing of fifteen thousand men. Of the force retained, four thousand were a French legion maintained by the king, two thousand other French at the expense of the States, and distributed among other troops, two thousand Scotch, three thousand English, three thousand Germans. The rest were native Netherlanders, among whom, however, were very few Hollanders and Zeelanders, from which races the navy, both public and mercantile, was almost wholly supplied.

The revenue of the United Provinces was estimated at between seven and eight millions of florins.

It is superfluous to call attention again to the wonderful smallness of the means, the minuteness of the physical enginry, as compared with more modern manifestations, especially in our own land and epoch, by which so stupendous a result had been reached. In the midst of an age in which regal and sacerdotal despotism had seemed as omnipotent and irreversible as the elemental laws of the universe, the republic had been reproduced. A commonwealth of sand-banks, lagoons, and meadows, less than fourteen thousand square miles in extent, had done battle, for nearly half a century, with the greatest of existing powers, a realm whose territory was nearly a third of the globe, and which claimed universal monarchy. And this had been done with an army averaging forty-six thousand men, half of them foreigners hired by the job, and by a sea-faring population, volunteering into ships of every class and denomination, from a fly-boat to a galleot of war.

And when the republic had won its independence, after this

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almost eternal warfare, it owed four or five millions of dollars, and had sometimes an annual revenue of nearly that amount.

It was estimated by Barneveld, at the conclusion of the truce, that the interest on the public debt of Spain was about thrice the amount of the yearly income of the republic, and it was characteristic of the financial ideas of the period, that fears were entertained lest a total repudiation of that burthen by the Spanish Government would enable it to resume the war against the provinces with redoubled energy [26]

The annual salary of Prince Maurice, who was to see his chief occupation gone by the cessation of the war, was fixed by the States at 120,000 florins.[27] It was agreed, that in case of his marriage he should receive a further yearly sum of 25,000 florins, and this addition was soon afterwards voted to him outright,[28] it being obvious that the prince would remain all his days a bachelor.

Count Frederic Henry likewise received a military salary of 25,000 florins,[29] while the emoluments of Lewis William were placed at 36,000 florins a year.[30]

It must be admitted that the republic was grateful. 70,000 dollars a year, in the seventeenth century, not only for life, but to be inherited afterwards by his younger brother, Frederic Henry, was surely a munificent sum to be accorded from the puny exchequer of the States-General to the chief magistrate of the nation.

The mighty transatlantic republic, with its population of thirty or forty millions, and its revenue of five hundred millions of dollars, pays 25,000 dollars annually for its president during his four years of office, and this in the second half of the nineteenth century, when a dollar is worth scarcely one-fifth of its value two hundred and fifty years ago.

Surely here is improvement, both in the capacity to produce and in the power to save.

[26] Van der Kemp, iii. 223.

[27] Van der Kemp (from the Sec. Res. Stat.-Gen.) iii. 250, 251.

[28] Ibid. 251, 252. "No one thing hath been of greater trouble to us," wrote Spencer and Winwood, "than the craving humour of Count Maurice."—Winwood's Memorials, iii. 1, 2.

[29] Ibid. 255.

[30] Ibid.

In the year 1609, died John, the last sovereign of Cleves and Juliers, and Jacob Arminius, Doctor of Divinity at Leyden. It would be difficult to imagine two more entirely dissimilar individuals of the human family than this lunatic duke and that theological professor. And yet, perhaps, the two names, more concisely than those of any other mortals, might serve as an index to the ghastly chronicle over which a coming generation was to shudder. The death of the duke was at first thought likely to break off the negotiations for truce. The States-General at once declared that they would permit no movements on the part of the Spanish party to seize the inheritance in behalf of the Catholic claimants. Prince Maurice, nothing loth to make use of so well-timed an event in order to cut for ever the tangled skein at the Hague, was for marching forthwith into the duchies.

But the archdukes gave such unequivocal assurances of abstaining from interference, and the desire for peace was so strong both in the obedient and in the United Provinces, that the question of the duchies was postponed. It was to serve as both torch and fuel for one of the longest and most hideous tragedies that had ever disgraced humanity. A thirty years' war of demons was, after a brief interval, to succeed the forty years' struggle between slaves and masters, which had just ended in the recognition of Dutch independence.

The gentle Arminius was in his grave, but a bloody harvest was fast ripening from the seeds which he had sown. That evil story must find its place in the melancholy chapter where the fortunes of the Dutch republic are blended with the grim chronicle of the thirty years' war. Until the time arrives for retracing the course of those united transactions to their final termination in the peace of Westphalia, it is premature to characterize an epoch which, at the moment with which we are now occupied, had not fairly begun.

The Gomarites accused the Arminians of being more lax than Papists, and of filling the soul of man with vilest arrogance and confidence in good works; while the Ar-

minians complained that the God of the Gomarites was an unjust God, himself the origin of sin.[31]

The disputes on these themes had been perpetual in the provinces ever since the early days of the Reformation. Of late, however, the acrimony of theological conflict had been growing day by day more intense. It was the eternal struggle of religious dogma to get possession of the State, and to make use of political forces in order to put fetters on the human soul ; to condemn it to slavery where most it requires freedom. The conflict between Gomarus and Arminius proceeded with such ferocity in Leyden, that, since the days of the memorable siege, to which the university owed its origin, men's minds had never been roused to such feverish anxiety. The theological cannonades, which thundered daily from the college buildings and caused all Holland to quake, seemed more appalling to the burghers than the enginry of Valdez and Boisot had ever seemed to their fathers.

The Gomarite doctrine gained most favour with the clergy, the Arminian creed with the municipal magistracies. The magistrates claimed that decisions concerning religious matters belonged to the supreme authority. The Gomarites contended that sacred matters should be referred to synods of the clergy.[32] Here was the germ of a conflict which might one day shake the republic to its foundations.

Barneveld, the great leader of the municipal party, who loved political power quite as well as he loved his country, was naturally a chieftain of the Arminians ; for church matters were no more separated from political matters in the commonwealth at that moment than they were in the cabinets of Henry, James, or Philip.

It was inevitable therefore that the war party should pour upon his head more than seven vials of theological wrath. The religious doctrines which he espoused were odious not only because they were deemed vile in themselves, but because he believed in them.

Arminianism was regarded as a new and horrible epidemic,

[31] Grotius, xvii. 790–792. [32] Grotius, xvii. 791.

daily gaining ground, and threatening to destroy the whole population. Men deliberated concerning the best means to cut off communication with the infected regions, and to extirpate the plague even by desperate and heroic remedies, as men in later days take measures against the cholera or the rinderpest.

Theological hatred was surely not extinct in the Netherlands. It was a consolation, however, that its influence was rendered less noxious by the vastly increased strength of principles long dormant in the atmosphere. Anna van der Hoven, buried alive in Brussels, simply because her Calvinistic creed was a crime in the eyes of the monks who murdered her, was the last victim to purely religious persecution. If there were one day to be still a tragedy or two in the Netherlands it was inevitable that theological hatred would be obliged to combine with political party spirit in its most condensed form before any deadly effect could be produced.

Thus the year 1609 is a memorable one in the world's history. It forms a great landmark in human progress. It witnessed the recognition of a republic, powerful in itself, and whose example was destined to be most influential upon the career of two mighty commonwealths of the future. The British empire, just expanding for wider flight than it had hitherto essayed, and about to pass through a series of vast revolutions, gathering strength of wing as it emerged from cloud after cloud ; and the American republic, whose frail and obscure beginnings at that very instant of time scarcely attracted a passing attention from the contemporaneous world—both these political organisms, to which so much of mankind's future liberties had been entrusted, were deeply indebted to the earlier self-governing commonwealth.

The Dutch republic was the first free nation to put a girdle of empire around the earth. It had courage, enterprise, intelligence, perseverance, faith in itself, the instinct of self-government and self-help, hatred of tyranny, the disposition to domineer, aggressiveness, greediness, inquisitiveness, in-

solence, the love of science, of liberty, and of money—all this in unlimited extent. It had one great defect,—it had no country. Upon that meagre standing ground its hand had moved the world with an impulse to be felt through all the ages, but there was not soil enough in those fourteen thousand square miles to form the metropolis of the magnificent empire which the genius of liberty had created beyond the seas.

That the political institutions bequeathed by the United States of the seventeenth century have been vastly improved, both in theory and practice, by the United States of the nineteenth, no American is likely to gainsay. That the elder Republic showed us also what to avoid, and was a living example of the perils besetting a Confederacy which dared not become a Union, is a lesson which we might take closely to heart.

But the year 1609 was not only memorable as marking an epoch in Dutch history. It was the beginning of a great and universal pause. The world had need of rest. Disintegration had been going on too rapidly, and it was absolutely necessary that there should be a new birth, if civilization were not to vanish.

A twenty years' truce between the Turkish and Holy Roman empires was nearly simultaneous with the twelve years' truce between Spain and the United Provinces. The Emperor Rudolph having refused to ratify the treaty which his brother Matthias had made, was in consequence partially discrowned. The same archduke who, thirty years before, had slipped away from Vienna in his nightgown, with his face blackened, to outwit and outgeneral William the Silent at Brussels, was now more successful in his manœuvres against his imperial brother. Standing at the head of his army in battle array, in the open fields before the walls of Prague, he received from the unfortunate Rudolph the crown and regalia of Hungary, and was by solemn treaty declared sovereign of that ancient and chivalrous kingdom.[33]

[33] Meteren, 600, 601.

His triumphal entrance into Vienna succeeded, where, surrounded by great nobles and burghers, with his brother Maximilian at his side, with immense pomp and with flowers strewn before his feet, he ratified that truce with Ahmed which Rudolph had rejected. Three months later he was crowned at Pressburg, having first accepted the conditions proposed by the estates of Hungary. Foremost among these was the provision that the exercise of the reformed religion should be free in all the cities and villages beneath his sceptre, and that every man in the kingdom was to worship God according to his conscience.

14 July, 1608.

19 Oct. 1608.

In the following March, at the very moment accordingly when the conclusive negotiations were fast ripening at Antwerp, Matthias granted religious peace for Austria likewise. Great was the indignation of his nephew Leopold, the nuncius, and the Spanish ambassador in consequence, by each and all of whom the revolutionary mischief-maker, with his brother's crown on his head, was threatened with excommunication.[34]

12 March, 1609.

As for Ferdinand of Styria, his wrath may well be imagined. He refused religious peace in his dominions with scorn ineffable. Not Gomarus in Leyden could have shrunk from Arminianism with more intense horror than that with which the archduke at Gratz recoiled from any form of Protestantism. He wrote to his brother-in-law the King of Spain and to other potentates—as if the very soul of Philip II. were alive within him—that he would rather have a country without inhabitants than with a single protestant on its soil.[35] He strongly urged upon his Catholic Majesty—as if such urging were necessary at the Spanish court—the necessity of extirpating heresy, root and branch.

Here was one man at least who knew what he meant, and on whom the dread lessons of fifty years of bloodshed had been lost. Magnificent was the contempt which this pupil of the Jesuits felt for any little progress made by the world

[34] Meteren, 600, 601. [35] Ibid.

since the days of Torquemada. In Ferdinand's view Alva was a Christian hero, scarcely second to Godfrey of Bouillon, Philip II. a sainted martyr, while the Dutch republic had never been born.

And Ferdinand was one day to sit on the throne of the holy Roman Empire. Might not a shudder come over the souls of men as coming events vaguely shaped themselves to prophetic eyes?

Meantime there was religious peace in Hungary, in Austria, in Bohemia, in France, in Great Britain, in the Netherlands. The hangman's hands were for a period at rest, so far as theology had need of them. Butchery in the name of Christ was suspended throughout Christendom. The Cross and the Crescent, Santiago and the Orange banner, were for a season in repose. 5 July, 1609.

There was a vast lull between two mighty storms. The forty years' war was in the past, the thirty years' war in the not far distant future.

CHAPTER LIII.

CONCLUSION.

FORTY-THREE years had passed since the memorable April morning in which the great nobles of the Netherlands presented their "Request" to the Regent Margaret at Brussels.

They had requested that the holy Spanish Inquisition might not be established on their soil to the suppression of all their political and religious institutions.

The war which those high-born "beggars" had then kindled, little knowing what they were doing, had now come to a close, and the successor of Philip II., instead of planting the Inquisition in the provinces, had recognised them as an independent, sovereign, protestant republic.

In the ratification which he had just signed of the treaty of truce the most Catholic king had in his turn made a Request. He had asked the States-General to deal kindly with their Catholic subjects.

That request was not answered with the axe and faggot; with the avenging sword of mercenary legions. On the contrary, it was destined to be granted. The world had gained something in forty-three years. It had at least begun to learn that the hangman is not the most appropriate teacher of religion.

During the period of apparent chaos with which this history of the great revolt has been occupied, there had in truth been a great re-organization, a perfected new birth. The republic had once more appeared in the world.

Its main characteristics have been indicated in the course of the narrative, for it was a polity which gradually unfolded itself out of the decay and change of previous organisms.

It was, as it were, in their own despite and unwittingly that the United Provinces became a republic at all.

In vain, after originally declaring their independence of the ancient tyrant, had they attempted to annex themselves to France and to England. The sovereignty had been spurned. The magnificent prize which France for centuries since has so persistently coveted, and the attainment of which has been a cardinal point of her perpetual policy—the Low Countries and the banks of the Rhine—was deliberately laid at her feet, and as deliberately refused.

It was the secret hope of the present monarch to repair the loss which the kingdom had suffered through the imbecility of his two immediate predecessors. But a great nation cannot with impunity permit itself to be despotically governed for thirty years by lunatics. It was not for the Béarnese, with all his valour, his wit, and his duplicity, to obtain the prize which Charles IX. and Henry III. had thrown away. Yet to make himself sovereign of the Netherlands was his guiding but most secret thought during all the wearisome and tortuous negotiations which preceded the truce ; nor did he abandon the great hope with the signature of the treaty of 1609.

Maurice of Nassau too was a formidable rival to Henry. The stadholder-prince was no republican. He was a good patriot, a noble soldier, an honest man. But his father had been offered the sovereignty of Holland and Zeeland, and the pistol of Balthasar Gerard had alone, in all human probability, prevented the great prince from becoming constitutional monarch of all the Netherlands, Batavian and Belgic.

Maurice himself asserted that not only had he been offered a million of dollars, and large estates besides in Germany, if he would leave the provinces to their fate, but that the archdukes had offered, would he join his fortunes with theirs, to place him in a higher position over all the Netherlands than he had ever enjoyed in the United Provinces, and that they had even unequivocally offered him the sovereignty over the whole land.[1]

Maurice was a man of truth, and we have no right to

[1] Jeannin, i. 174, 175.

dispute the accuracy of the extraordinary statement. He must however have reflected upon the offer once made by the Prince of Darkness from the mountain top, and have asked himself by what machinery the archdukes proposed to place him in possession of such a kingdom.

There had, however, been serious question among leading Dutch statesmen of making him constitutional, hereditary monarch of the United Netherlands. As late as 1602 a secret conference was held at the house of Olden-Barneveld, in which the Advocate had himself urged the claims of the prince to the sovereignty, and reminded his guests that the signed and sealed documents—with the concurrence of the Amsterdam municipality alone lacking—by which William the Silent had been invited to assume the crown were still in the possession of his son.[2]

Nothing came of these deliberations. It was agreed that to stir in the matter at that moment would be premature, and that the pursuit by Maurice of the monarchy in the circumstances then existing would not only overburthen him with expense, but make him a more conspicuous mark than ever for the assassin. It is certain that the prince manifested no undue anxiety at any period in regard to those transactions.

Subsequently, as Olden-Barneveld's personal power increased, and as the negotiations for peace became more and more likely to prove successful, the Advocate lost all relish for placing his great rival on a throne. The whole project, with the documents and secret schemes therewith connected, became mere alms for oblivion. Barneveld himself, although of comparatively humble birth and station, was likely with time to exercise more real power in the State than either Henry or Maurice; and thus while there were three individuals who in different ways aspired to supreme power, the republic, notwithstanding, asserted and established itself.

[2] Van der Kemp, ii. 100–102, and 390–395. Leven van Olden-Barneveld 156. Wagenaar, ix. 454.

Freedom of government and freedom of religion were, on the whole, assisted by this triple antagonism. The prince, so soon as war was over, hated the Advocate and his daily increasing power more and more. He allied himself more closely than ever with the Gomarites and the clerical party in general, and did his best to inflame the persecuting spirit, already existing in the provinces, against the Catholics and the later sects of Protestants.

Jeannin warned him that "by thus howling with the priests" he would be suspected of more desperately ambitious designs than he perhaps really cherished.[3]

On the other hand, Barneveld was accused of a willingness to wink at the introduction, privately and quietly, of the Roman Catholic worship. That this was the deadliest of sins, there was no doubt whatever in the minds of his revilers. When it was added that he was suspected of the Arminian leprosy, and that he could tolerate the thought that a virtuous man or woman, not predestined from all time for salvation, could possibly find the way to heaven, language becomes powerless to stigmatize his depravity. Whatever the punishment impending over his head in this world or the next, it is certain that the cause of human freedom was not destined on the whole to lose ground through the life-work of Barneveld.

A champion of liberties rather than of liberty, he defended his fatherland with heart and soul against the stranger; yet the government of that fatherland was, in his judgment, to be transferred from the hand of the foreigner, not to the self-governing people, but to the provincial corporations. For the People he had no respect, and perhaps little affection. He often spoke of popular rights with contempt. Of popular sovereignty he had no conception. His patriotism, like his ambition, was provincial. Yet his perceptions as to eternal necessity in all healthy governments taught him that comprehensible relations between the state and the population were needful to the very existence of a free commonwealth. The

[3] Van der Kemp, iii. 72. Jeannin.

United Provinces, he maintained, were not a republic, but a league of seven provinces very loosely hung together, a mere provisional organization for which it was not then possible to substitute anything better. He expressed this opinion with deep regret, just as the war of independence was closing, and added his conviction that, without some well-ordered government, no republic could stand.

Yet, as time wore on, the Advocate was destined to acquiesce more and more in this defective constitution. A settled theory there was none, and it would have been difficult legally and historically to establish the central sovereignty of the States-General as matter of right.

Thus Barneveld, who was anything but a democrat, became, almost unwittingly, the champion of the least venerable or imposing of all forms of aristocracy—an oligarchy of traders who imagined themselves patricians. Corporate rights, not popular liberty, seemed, in his view, the precious gains made by such a prodigious expenditure of time, money, and blood. Although such acquisitions were practically a vast addition to the stock of human freedom then existing in the world, yet torrents of blood and millions of treasure were to be wasted in the coming centuries before mankind was to convince itself that a republic is only to be made powerful and perpetual by placing itself upon the basis of popular right rather than on that of municipal privilege.

The singular docility of the Dutch people, combined with the simplicity, honesty, and practical sagacity of the earlier burgher patricians, made the defects of the system tolerable for a longer period than might have been expected; nor was it until theological dissensions had gathered to such intensity as to set the whole commonwealth aflame that the grave defects in the political structure could be fairly estimated.

It would be anticipating a dark chapter in the history of the United Provinces were the reader's attention now to be called to those fearful convulsions. The greatest reserve is therefore necessary at present in alluding to the subject.

It was not to be expected that an imperious, energetic

but somewhat limited nature like that of Barneveld should at that epoch thoroughly comprehend the meaning of religious freedom. William the Silent alone seems to have risen to that height. A conscientious Calvinist himself, the father of his country would have been glad to see Protestant and Papist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Anabaptist living together in harmony and political equality. This was not to be. The soul of the immortal prince could not inspire the hearts of his contemporaries. That Barneveld was disposed to a breadth of religious sympathy unusual in those days, seems certain. It was inevitable, too, that the mild doctrines of Arminius should be more in harmony with such a character than were the fierce dogmas of Calvin. But the struggle, either to force Arminianism upon the Church which considered itself the established one in the Netherlands, or to expel the Calvinists from it, had not yet begun; although the seeds of religious persecution of Protestants by Protestants had already been sown broadcast.

The day was not far distant when the very Calvinists, to whom, more than to any other class of men, the political liberties of Holland, England, and America are due, were to be hunted out of churches into farm-houses, suburban hovels, and canal-boats by the arm of provincial sovereignty and in the name of state-rights, as pitilessly as the early reformers had been driven out of cathedrals in the name of emperor and pope; and when even those refuges for conscientious worship were to be denied by the dominant sect. And the day was to come, too, when the Calvinists, regaining ascendency in their turn, were to hunt the heterodox as they had themselves been hunted; and this, at the very moment when their fellow Calvinists of England were driven by the Church of that kingdom into the American wilderness.

Toleration—that intolerable term of insult to all who love liberty—had not yet been discovered. It had scarcely occurred to Arminian or Presbyterian that civil authority and ecclesiastical doctrine could be divorced from each other. As the individual sovereignty of the seven states established

itself more and more securely, the right of provincial power to dictate religious dogmas, and to superintend the popular conscience, was exercised with a placid arrogance which papal infallibility could scarcely exceed. The alternation was only between the sects, each in its turn becoming orthodox, and therefore persecuting. The lessened intensity of persecution however, which priesthood and authority were now allowed to exercise, marked the gains secured.

Yet while we censure—as we have a right to do from the point of view which we have gained after centuries—the crimes committed by bigotry against liberty, we should be false to our faith in human progress did we not acknowledge our debt of gratitude to the hot gospellers of Holland and England.

The doctrine of predestination, the consciousness of being chosen soldiers of Christ, inspired those puritans, who founded the commonwealths of England, of Holland, and of America, with a contempt of toil, danger,. and death which enabled them to accomplish things almost supernatural.

No uncouthness of phraseology, no unlovely austerity of deportment, could, except to vulgar minds, make that sublime enthusiasm ridiculous, which on either side the ocean ever confronted tyranny with dauntless front, and welcomed death on battle-field, scaffold, or rack with perfect composure.

The early puritan at least believed. The very intensity of his belief made him—all unconsciously to himself, and narrowed as was his view of his position—the great instrument by which the widest human liberty was to be gained for all mankind.

The elected favourite of the King of kings feared the power of no earthly king. Accepting in rapture the decrees of a supernatural tyranny, he rose on mighty wings above the reach of human wrath. Prostrating himself before a God of vengeance, of jealousy, and of injustice, he naturally imitated the attributes which he believed to be divine. It was inevitable, therefore, that Barneveld, and those who thought with him, when they should attempt to force the

children of Belial into the company of the elect and to drive the faithful out of their own churches, should be detested as bitterly as papists had ever been.

Had Barneveld's intellect been broad enough to imagine in a great republic the separation of Church and State, he would deserve a tenderer sympathy, but he would have been far in advance of his age. It is not cheerful to see so powerful an intellect and so patriotic a character daring to entrust the relations between man and his Maker to the decree of a trading corporation. But alas! the world was to wait for centuries until it should learn that the State can best defend religion by letting it alone, and that the political arm is apt to wither with palsy when it attempts to control the human conscience.

It is not entirely the commonwealth of the United Netherlands that is of importance in the epoch which I have endeavoured to illustrate. History can have neither value nor charm for those who are not impressed with a conviction of its continuity.

More than ever during the period which we call modern history has this idea of the continuousness of our race, and especially of the inhabitants of Europe and America, become almost oppressive to the imagination. There is a sense of immortality even upon earth when we see the succession of heritages in the domains of science, of intellectual and material wealth by which mankind, generation after generation, is enriching itself.

If this progress be a dream, if mankind be describing a limited circle instead of advancing towards the infinite, then no study can be more contemptible than the study of history.

Few strides more gigantic have been taken in the march of humanity than those by which a parcel of outlying provinces in the north of Europe exchanged slavery to a foreign despotism and to the Holy Inquisition for the position of a self-governing commonwealth, in the front rank of contemporary powers, and in many respects the foremost of the world. It is impossible to calculate the amount of

benefit rendered to civilization by the example of the Dutch republic. It has been a model which has been imitated, in many respects, by great nations. It has even been valuable in its very defects; indicating to the patient observer many errors most important to avoid.

Therefore, had the little republic sunk for ever in the sea so soon as the treaty of peace had been signed at Antwerp, its career would have been prolific of good for all succeeding time.

Exactly at the moment when a splendid but decaying despotism, founded upon wrong—upon oppression of the human body and the immortal soul, upon slavery, in short, of the worst kind—was awaking from its insane dream of universal empire to a consciousness of its own decay, the new republic was recognised among the nations.

It would hardly be incorrect to describe the Holland of the beginning of the seventeenth century as the exact reverse of Spain. In the commonwealth labour was most honourable; in the kingdom it was vile. In the north to be idle was accounted and punished as a crime. In the southern peninsula, to be contaminated with mechanical, mercantile, commercial, manufacturing pursuits, was to be accursed. Labour was for slaves, and at last the mere spectacle of labour became so offensive that even the slaves were expelled from the land. To work was as degrading in the south as to beg or to steal was esteemed unworthy of humanity in the north. To think a man's thought upon high matters of religion and government, and through a thousand errors to pursue the truth, with the aid of the Most High and with the best use of human reason, was a privilege secured by the commonwealth, at the expense of two generations of continuous bloodshed. To lie fettered, soul and body, at the feet of authority wielded by a priesthood in its last stage of corruption, and monarchy almost reduced to imbecility, was the lot of the chivalrous, genial, but much oppressed Spaniard.

The pictures painted of the republic by shrewd and caustic observers, not inclined by nature or craft to portray freedom

in too engaging colours, seem, when contrasted with those revealed of Spain, almost like enthusiastic fantasies of an ideal commonwealth.

During the last twenty years of the great war the material prosperity of the Netherlands had wonderfully increased. They had become the first commercial nation in the world. They had acquired the supremacy of the seas. The population of Amsterdam had in twenty years increased from seventy thousand to a hundred and thirty thousand, and was destined to be again more than doubled in the coming decade.[4] The population of Antwerp had sunk almost as rapidly as that of its rival had increased; having lessened by fifty thousand during the same period.[5] The commercial capital of the obedient provinces, having already lost much of its famous traffic by the great changes in the commercial current of the world, was unable to compete with the cities of the United Provinces in the vast trade which the geographical discoveries of the preceding century had opened to civilization. Freedom of thought and action were denied, and without such liberty it was impossible for oceanic commerce to thrive. Moreover, the possession by the Hollanders of the Scheld forts below Antwerp, and of Flushing at the river's mouth, suffocated the ancient city, and would of itself have been sufficient to paralyze all its efforts.

In Antwerp the exchange, where once thousands of the great merchants of the earth held their daily financial parliament, now echoed to the solitary footfall of the passing stranger. Ships lay rotting at the quays; brambles grew in the commercial streets. In Amsterdam the city had been enlarged by two-thirds, and those who swarmed thither to seek their fortunes could not wait for the streets to be laid out and houses to be built, but established themselves in the

[4] Tomaso Contarini ritornato Ambre dalli Signori Stati di Fiandra (anno 1610).—(MS. Archives of Venice.) Antonio Donato in 1618 puts the number of inhabitants at 300,000, and describes the city as "the very image of Venice in its prime." The streets and public places were so thronged and bustling that "the scene looked to him like a fair to end in one day."—Relazione, MS.

[5] Ibid. Antwerp had sunk from 150,000 to 80,000.

environs, building themselves hovels and temporary residences, although certain to find their encampments swept away with the steady expanse of the city.[6] As much land as could be covered by a man's foot was worth a ducat in gold.[7]

In every branch of human industry these republicans took the lead. On that scrap of solid ground, rescued by human energy from the ocean, were the most fertile pastures in the world. On those pastures grazed the most famous cattle in the world. An ox often weighed more than two thousand pounds.[8] The cows produced two and three calves at a time, the sheep four and five lambs.[9] In a single village four thousand kine were counted.[10] Butter and cheese were exported to the annual value of a million, salted provisions to an incredible extent. The farmers were industrious, thriving, and independent. It is an amusing illustration of the agricultural thrift and republican simplicity of this people that on one occasion a farmer proposed to Prince Maurice that he should marry his daughter, promising with her a dowry of a hundred thousand florins.[11]

The mechanical ingenuity of the Netherlanders, already celebrated by Julius Cæsar and by Tacitus, had lost nothing of its ancient fame. The contemporary world confessed that in many fabrics the Hollanders were at the head of mankind. Dutch linen, manufactured of the flax grown on their own fields or imported from the obedient provinces, was esteemed a fitting present for kings to make and to receive. The name of the country had passed into the literature of England as synonymous with the delicate fabric itself. The Venetians confessed themselves equalled, if not outdone, by the crystal

[6] Contarini, Relazione, MS.

[7] Ibid. "All' habitationi di questa città concorrono i popoli con tanto ardore che non ostante la proibitione di alloggiarsi per certo spatio all' incontro si fabbrice non di meno ogni anno con allegro animo ogni giorno case di legni ben che sia certo di vederse le distruggere in breve tanto stimano il poter cominciare a metter il loro nido almeno vicino se non dentro a quella città nelle quale per il semplice fondo si paga un ducato d'oro tanto terreno quanto può coprire un huomo con la pianta del piede."

[8] Contarini, Relazione, MS.

[9] Ibid. [10] Ibid. [11] Ibid.

workers and sugar refiners of the northern republic.[12] The tapestries of Arras—the name of which Walloon city had become a household word of luxury in all modern languages—were now transplanted to the soil of freedom, more congenial to the advancement of art. Brocades of the precious metals; splendid satins and velvets; serges and homely fustians; laces of thread and silk; the finer and coarser manufactures of clay and porcelain; iron, steel, and all useful fabrics for the building and outfitting of ships; substantial broadcloths manufactured of wool imported from Scotland—all this was but a portion of the industrial production of the provinces.

They supplied the deficiency of coal, not then an article readily obtained by commerce, with other remains of antediluvian forests long since buried in the sea, and now recovered from its depths and made useful and portable by untiring industry. Peat was not only the fuel for the fireside, but for the extensive fabrics of the country, and its advantages so much excited the admiration of the Venetian envoys that they sent home samples of it, in the hope that the lagunes of Venice might prove as prolific of this indispensable article as the polders of Holland.[13]

But the foundation of the national wealth, the source of the apparently fabulous power by which the republic had at last overthrown her gigantic antagonist, was the ocean. The republic was sea-born and sea-sustained.

She had nearly one hundred thousand sailors, and three thousand ships.[14] The sailors were the boldest, the best disciplined, and the most experienced in the world, whether for peaceable seafaring or ocean warfare. The ships were capable of furnishing from out of their number in time of need the most numerous and the best appointed navy then known to mankind.

[12] Contarini, Relazione, MS.

[13] Contarini, Relazione, MS. "E perchè pare quasi questa cosa incredibile ho fatto mettere qualche pezzi di queste turbe con le mie robbe che vengono per mare acciò si piacesse al Signore Dio che in questi contorni si trovasse terreno simile potesse il pubblico ricevere due gran benefitii; uno di cavare il terreno che riempe le lagune; l'altro di abondar la città di materia per abbrucciare."

[14] Ibid.

The republic had the carrying trade for all nations. Feeling its very existence dependent upon commerce, it had strode centuries in advance of the contemporary world in the liberation of trade. But two or three per cent. *ad valorem* was levied upon imports; foreign goods however being subject, as well as internal products, to heavy imposts in the way of both direct and indirect taxation.

Every article of necessity or luxury known was to be purchased in profusion and at reasonable prices in the warehouses of Holland.

A swarm of river vessels and fly-boats were coming daily through the rivers of Germany, France and the Netherlands, laden with the agricultural products and the choice manufactures of central and western Europe. Wine and oil, and delicate fabrics in thread and wool, came from France, but no silks, velvets, nor satins; for the great Sully had succeeded in persuading his master that the white mulberry would not grow in his kingdom, and that silk manufactures were an impossible dream for France. Nearly a thousand ships were constantly employed in the Baltic trade.[15] The forests of Holland were almost as extensive as those which grew on Norwegian hills, but they were submerged. The foundation of a single mansion required a grove, and wood was extensively used in the superstructure. The houses, built of a framework of substantial timber, and filled in with brick or rubble, were raised almost as rapidly as tents, during the prodigious expansion of industry towards the end of the war.[16] From the realms of the Osterlings, or shores of the Baltic, came daily fleets laden with wheat and other grains, so that even in time of famine the granaries of the republic were overflowing, and ready to dispense the material of life to the outer world.

Eight hundred vessels of lesser size but compact build were perpetually fishing for herrings on the northern coasts. These hardy mariners, the militia of the sea, who had learned in their life of hardship and daring the art of

[15] Contarini, Relazione, MS. [16] Ibid.

destroying Spanish and Portuguese armadas, and confronting the dangers of either pole, passed a long season on the deep. Commercial voyagers as well as fishermen, they salted their fish as soon as taken from the sea, and transported them to the various ports of Europe, thus reducing their herrings into specie before their return, and proving that a fishery in such hands was worth more than the mines of Mexico and Peru.

It is customary to speak of the natural resources of a country as furnishing a guarantee of material prosperity. But here was a republic almost without natural resources, which had yet supplied by human intelligence and thrift what a niggard nature had denied. Spain was overflowing with unlimited treasure, and had possessed half the world in fee ; and Spain was bankrupt, decaying, sinking into universal pauperism. Holland, with freedom of thought, of commerce, of speech, of action, placed itself, by intellectual power alone, in the front rank of civilization.

From Cathay, from the tropical coasts of Africa, and from farthest Ind, came every drug, spice, or plant, every valuable jewel, every costly fabric, that human ingenuity had discovered or created. The Spaniards, maintaining a frail tenure upon a portion of those prolific regions, gathered their spice harvests at the point of the sword,[17] and were frequently unable to prevent their northern rivals from ravaging such fields as they had not yet been able to appropriate.[18]

Certainly this conduct of the Hollanders was barbarism and supreme selfishness, if judged by the sounder political economy of our time. Yet it should never be forgotten that the contest between Spain and Holland in those distant regions, as everywhere else, was war to the knife between superstition and freedom, between the spirits of progress and of dogma. Hard blows and foul blows were struck in such a fight, and humanity, although gaining at last immense

[17] "Tengono quâ Hollandesi la maggior parte di detta Isola (Ternat) rimanendo la minore a Spagnuoli che raccolgono i loro pochi garófani con la punta della spada," &c. &c. &c.—Contarini, MS. [18] Ibid.

results, had much to suffer and much to learn ere the day was won.

But Spain was nearly beaten out of those eastern regions, and the very fact that the naval supremacy of the republic placed her ancient tyrant at her mercy was the main reason for Spain to conclude the treaty of truce. Lest she should lose the India trade entirely, Spain consented to the treaty article by which, without mentioning the word, she conceded the thing. It was almost pathetic to witness, as we have witnessed, this despotism in its dotage, mumbling so long over the formal concession to her conqueror of a portion of that India trade which would have been entirely wrested from herself had the war continued. And of this Spain was at heart entirely convinced. Thus the Portuguese, once the lords and masters, as they had been the European discoverers, of those prolific regions and of the ocean highways which led to them, now came with docility to the republic which they had once affected to despise, and purchased the cloves and the allspice, the nutmegs and the cinnamon, of which they had held the monopoly; or waited with patience until the untiring Hollanders should bring the precious wares to the peninsula ports.[19]

A Dutch Indiaman would make her voyage to the antipodes and her return in less time than was spent by a Portuguese or a Spaniard in the outward voyage.[20] To accomplish such an enterprise in two years was accounted a wonder of rapidity, and when it is remembered that inland navigation through France by canal and river from the North Sea to the Mediterranean was considered both speedier and safer, because the sea voyage between the same points might last four or five months, it must be admitted that two years occupied in passing from one end of the earth to the other and back again might well seem a miracle.

The republic was among the wealthiest and the most powerful of organized States. Her population might be estimated at three millions and a half, about equal to that of

[19] Contarini, Relazione, MS. [20] Ibid.

England at the same period. But she was richer than England. Nowhere in the world was so large a production in proportion to the numbers of a people. Nowhere were so few unproductive consumers. Every one was at work. Vagabonds, idlers, and do-nothings, such as must be in every community, were caught up by the authorities and made to earn their bread.[21] The devil's pillow, idleness, was smoothed for no portion of the population.

There were no beggars, few paupers, no insolently luxurious and ostentatiously idle class. The modesty, thrift, and simple elegance of the housekeeping, even among the wealthy, was noted by travellers with surprise.[22] It will be remembered with how much amused wonder, followed by something like contempt, the magnificent household of Spinola, during his embassy at the Hague, was surveyed by the honest burghers of Holland. The authorities showed their wisdom in permitting the absurd exhibition, as an example of what should be shunned, in spite of grave remonstrances from many of the citizens. Drunken Helotism is not the only form of erring humanity capable of reading lessons to a republic.

There had been monasteries, convents, ecclesiastical establishments of all kinds in the country, before the great war

[21] Contarini.

[22] "In somma sono quei popoli così inchinati all' industria et al negotio che niuna cosa e tanto difficile che non ardiscono di superarla. . . . . Sopra tutte le cose invigliarano a questo di mantenere il negotio et favorirlo in modo libero da soverchie gravezze che cessi ogni occasione di divertirlo e secarlo. Abbondano di richezze e di commodi con tal misura che non si vede nei piu ricchi lusso o pompe estraordinarie servando tutti et in casa et fuori nell' habito e nel rimanente la vera mediocrità di una modesta fortuna senza che si vedano nè additamenti ne argenterie ne fornimenti ne cadreghe de sete come apunto non si vedevano ne anco in questa città (Venezia) nei tempi de Vostri Antecessori. *Nei poveri non si conosce mancamento di alcuna delle cose necessarie* anzi nelle loro piccioli ed humili abitationi non meno che nelle case de' grandi risplende una politia singolare onde riducono da tutte le parti et sono tutti *cosi inimici del mal governo et dell' otio* che si sono luoghi particolari nelle citta fabbricata di ordine pubblico ove quei del governo fanno serrar le genti vagabonde et otiosi o che non governano bene le cose loro bastando che o le moglie o altre dei lor congionti se ne querelino al magistrato et in quei luoghi sono costretti di lavorare et guadagnarsi le spese ancorchè non vogliano."—Contarini Relazione MS.

"Li popoli di questo paese sono nati al travaglio ed al stentare e tutti travagliano, chi per una via, chi per l'altra. . . . . Non s'usa servitori, non si veste di seta, non si tapezza le case, tutto è menaggio molto sottile e limitato."—Anto. Donat. Relazione, MS.

between Holland and the Inquisition. These had, as a matter of course, been confiscated as the strife went on. The buildings, farms, and funds, once the property of the Church, had not, however, been seized upon, as in other Protestant lands, by rapacious monarchs, and distributed among great nobles according to royal caprice. Monarchs might give the revenue of a suppressed convent to a cook, as reward for a successful pudding; the surface of Britain and the continent might be covered with abbeys and monasteries now converted into lordly palaces—passing thus from the dead hand of the Church into the idle and unproductive palm of the noble; but the ancient ecclesiastical establishments of the free Netherlands were changed into eleemosynary institutions, admirably organized and administered with wisdom and economy, where orphans of the poor, widows of those slain in the battles for freedom by land and sea, and the aged and the infirm, who had deserved well of the republic in the days of their strength, were educated or cherished at the expense of the public, thus endowed from the spoils of the Church.[23]

In Spain, monasteries upon monasteries were rising day by day, as if there were not yet receptacles enough for monks and priests, while thousands upon thousands of Spaniards were pressing into the ranks of the priesthood, and almost forcing themselves into monasteries, that they might be privileged to beg, because ashamed to work. In the United Netherlands the confiscated convents, with their revenues, were appropriated for the good of those who were too young or too old to labour, and too poor to maintain themselves

[23] "Si vedono in quelle città chiese antiche bellissime parte distrutte et parte senza imagini ridotti per i loro esercitii che non consistono in altro che all' ascoltar le domeniche e pochi altri giorni le prediche da' loro predicatori. Dell' entrate di queste chiese ch' erano gia dei prelati, dei monasteri, e dei sacerdoti mantengono un buon numero de hospitali nelle principale città del paese fabbrichati con molte spese, governati con bellissimi ordini et custoditi con gran politia ne quali nutriscono allevano et mantengono i vecchi impotenti, i figli orfani ed altri de' benemeriti dello Stato che hanno spesi i migliori anni o perso le vite nei loro servitii. Et a questi hospitali si applicheranno ancora l'entrate di quei pochi monasterii et collegi Teutonici che si rimangono, morti che siano quelli che le godono al presente."—Contarini, MS. Antonio Donato, too, speaks of these hospitals as model institutions.—Relazione, MS.

without work. Need men look further than to this simple fact to learn why Spain was decaying while the republic was rising?

The ordinary budget of the United Provinces was about equal to that of England, varying not much from four millions of florins, or four hundred thousand pounds. But the extraordinary revenue was comparatively without limits, and there had been years, during the war, when the citizens had taxed themselves as highly as fifty per cent. on each individual income, and doubled the receipts of the exchequer.[24] The budget was proposed once a year, by the council of state, and voted by the States-General, who assigned the quota of each province; that of Holland being always one-half of the whole, that of Zeeland sixteen per cent., and that of the other five of course in lesser proportions. The revenue was collected in the separate provinces, one-third of the whole being retained for provincial expenses, and the balance paid into the general treasury.[25] There was a public debt, the annual interest of which amounted to 200,000 florins. During the war, money had been borrowed at as high a rate as thirty-six per cent., but at the conclusion of hostilities the States could borrow at six per cent., and the whole debt was funded on that basis. Taxation was enormously heavy, but patriotism caused it to be borne with cheerfulness, and productive industry made it comparatively light. Rents were charged twenty-five per cent. A hundred per cent. was levied upon beer, wine, meat, salt, spirits. Other articles of necessity and luxury were almost as severely taxed.[26] It is not easy to enumerate the tax-list, scarcely anything foreign or domestic being exempted, while the grave error was often committed of taxing the same article, in different forms, four, five, and six times.

The people virtually taxed themselves, although the superstition concerning the State, as something distinct from and superior to the people, was to linger long and work infinite mischief among those seven republics which were never destined

[24] Contarini, MS. [25] Ibid. [6] Ibid.

to be welded theoretically and legally into a union. The sacredness of corporations had succeeded, in a measure, to the divinity which hedges kings. Nevertheless, those corporations were so numerous as to be effectively open to a far larger proportion of the population than, in those days, had ever dreamed before of participating in the Government. The magistracies were in general unpaid and little coveted, being regarded as a burthen and a responsibility rather than an object of ambition. The jurisconsults, called pensionaries, who assisted the municipal authorities, received, however, a modest salary, never exceeding 1500 florins a year.

These numerous bodies, provincial and municipal, elected themselves by supplying their own vacancies. The magistrates were appointed by the stadholder, on a double or triple nomination from the municipal board. This was not impartial suffrage nor manhood suffrage. The germ of a hateful burgher-oligarchy was in the system, but, as compared with Spain, where municipal magistracies were sold by the crown at public auction ; or with France, where every office in church, law, magistrature, or court was an object of merchandise disposed of in open market, the system was purity itself, and marked a great advance in the science of government.

It should never be forgotten, moreover, that while the presidents and judges of the highest courts of judicature in other civilized lands were at the mercy of an irresponsible sovereign, and held office—even although it had been paid for in solid specie—at his pleasure, the supreme justices of the high courts of appeal at the Hague were nominated by a senate, and confirmed by a stadholder, and that they exercised their functions for life,[27] or so long as they conducted themselves virtuously in their high office—*quamdiu se bene gesserint.*

If one of the great objects of a civilized community is to secure to all men their own—*ut sua tenerent*—surely it must be admitted that the republic was in advance of all contem-

[27] Contarini, MS.

porary States in the laying down of this vital principle, the independence of judges.

As to the army and navy of the United Provinces, enough has been said, in earlier chapters of these volumes, to indicate the improvements introduced by Prince Maurice, and now carried to the highest point of perfection ever attained in that period. There is no doubt whatever, that for discipline, experience, equipment, effectiveness of movement, and general organization, the army of the republic was the model army of Europe.[28] It amounted to but thirty thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred cavalry, but this number was a large one for a standing army at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was composed of a variety of materials, Hollanders, Walloons, Flemings, Scotch, English, Irish, Germans, but all welded together into a machine of perfect regularity. The private foot-soldier received twelve florins for a so-called month of forty-two days, the drummer and corporal eighteen, the lieutenant fifty-two, and the captain one hundred and fifty florins.[29] Prompt payment was made every week.[30] Obedience was implicit; mutiny, such as was of periodical recurrence in the archduke's army, entirely unknown. The slightest theft was punished with the gallows,[31] and there was therefore no thieving.

The most accurate and critical observers confessed, almost against their will, that no army in Europe could compare with the troops of the States. As to the famous regiments of Sicily, and the ancient legions of Naples and Milan, a distinguished Venetian envoy, who had seen all the camps and courts of Christendom, and was certainly not disposed to overrate the Hollanders at the expense of the Italians, if any rivalry between them had been possible, declared that every private soldier in the republic was fit to be a captain in any

[28] "Ma tutta gente esquisita per la propria conditione per l' habito gia fermo al patire et al combattere per tanti anni di guerra et per la singolare obbedienza accompagnata da tutti gli ordini della vera militare disciplina essendo tenuti in continua esercitatione de' capitani es oggetti di gran qualità." —Contarini, MS.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid. "Ogni minimo furto si castiga con la forca."

Italian army; while, on the other hand, there was scarcely an Italian captain who would be accepted as a private in any company of the States.[32] So low had the once-famous soldiery of Alva, Don John, and Alexander Farnese descended.

The cavalry of the republic was even more perfectly organized than was the infantry. "I want words to describe its perfection," said Contarini.[33] The pay was very high, and very prompt. A captain received four hundred florins a month (of forty-two days), a lieutenant one hundred and eighty florins, and other officers and privates in proportion.[34] These rates would be very high in our own day. When allowance is made for the difference in the value of money at the respective epochs, the salaries are prodigious; but the thrifty republic found its account in paying well and paying regularly the champions on whom so much depended, and by whom such splendid services had been rendered.[35]

While the soldiers in the pay of Queen Elizabeth were crawling to her palace gates to die of starvation before her eyes; while the veterans of Spain and of Italy had organized themselves into a permanent military, mutinous republic, on the soil of the so-called obedient Netherland, because they were left by their masters without clothing or food; the cavalry and infantry of the Dutch commonwealth, thanks to the organizing spirit and the wholesome thrift of the burgher authorities, were contented, obedient, well fed, well clothed, and well paid; devoted to their Government, and ever ready to die in its defence.

Nor was it only on the regular army that reliance was

[32] Posso affirmar a Vostra Serenità che qual si voglia fante privato fra quelle militie si stimarebbe qui buono per comandare una compagnia tanto è declinato in Italia e l'uso et l'antico splendore della militar disciplina che ci bisogna impararla dalle nationi straniere che pur l'appriessero da quelle di questa provincia. Et a tale sono arrivati i gradi della militia che molti presso di noi capitani difficilmente presso di loro sarebbono admessi per buoni soldati."—Contarini, MS.

"Le qualità delle militie terrestri che servono in questi Stati sono senza dubbio le migliori di Europa e del Mondo," says Antonio Donato, adding that among them "the first place is held by the English infantry, best beloved by the natives, brave, patient veterans, whose habits and character are in conformity with the country."—Relazione, MS.

[33] Ibid. "Della Cavalleria debbo dire poco poiche poco si può dire che arrivi ad esprimere la sua perfezione."

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

placed. On the contrary, every able-bodied man in the country was liable to be called upon to serve, at any moment, in the militia. All were trained to arms, and provided with arms, and there had been years during this perpetual war in which one man out of three of the whole male population was ready to be mustered at any moment into the field.[36]

Even more could be said in praise of the navy than has been stated of the armies of the republic; for the contemporary accounts of foreigners, and of foreigners who were apt to be satirical, rather than enthusiastic, when describing the institutions, leading personages, and customs of other countries, seemed ever to speak of the United Provinces in terms of eulogy. In commerce, as in war, the naval supremacy of the republic was indisputable. It was easy for the States to place two thousand vessels of war in commission, if necessary, of tonnage varying from four hundred to twelve hundred tons, to man them with the hardiest and boldest sailors in the world, and to despatch them with promptness to any quarter of the globe.[37]

It was recognised as nearly impossible to compel a war-vessel of the republic to surrender.[38] Hardly an instance was

[36] "Si dimostrano tutti quei popoli così inchinati alla militia per la difesa commune che si piacesse a' Serenissimi Stati di ricercare il terzo uomo da tutto il paese offerirano essi che pochi si sarebbono i quali non desiderassero che a loro ne toccasse la sorte tanto si rende piacevole all' orecchie di quelle genti il nome della guerra."—Contarini, MS.

[37] Contarini, MS. "Le forze del mare dei Serenissimi Stati sono veramente stimate le maggiori che posse havere altro Principe per la copia dei vascelli et per il numero di marinari et per la qualità degli uomini di comando. Tenendosi per cosa certa che possan essere in quelle Provincie settanta mille marinari buoni et intelligenti non solo per l'uso delle navigationi ma insieme ancora per le battaglie navali nelle quali si adoperano per soldati et ognuno di essi per la singolare attitudine et ordinaria assuefattione è solito di far più che molti soldati insieme. Et ogni volta che volessero fare un sforzo per qualunque occasione potrebbono metter insieme il numero di due mille vascelli sufficienti per ogni fattione senza far in essi spese di momento per la prontezza et delle genti e dei vascelli medesimi sempre apparrechiate in mano de particolari." Antonio Donato puts the number of Dutch vessels of all classes at nearly 6,000. Relazione, MS. "This fury for dominion upon the sea," he says, "increases every day, and is sustained by such assiduity, intelligence, and interest as to show that it is the business of all, and the whole business, strength, and security of the States."

[38] "Mentre sono certi che gli Hollandesi piu tosto che lasciarsi vincere darebbero fuoco al proprio vascello per abbruciare con se medesimi l'inimico insieme. Onde con questi due termini della clemenza (agli inimici) *e del sommo rigore sono fatti padroni del mar.*"—Contarini, MS.

on her naval record of submission, even to far superior force, while it was filled with the tragic but heroic histories of commanders who had blown their ships, with every man on board, into the air, rather than strike their flag. Such was the character, and such the capacity of the sea-born republic.

That republic had serious and radical defects, but the design remained to be imitated and improved upon, centuries afterwards. The history of the rise and progress of the Dutch republic is a leading chapter in the history of human liberty.

The great misfortune of the commonwealth of the United Provinces, next to the slenderness of its geographical proportions, was the fact that it was without a centre and without a head, and therefore not a nation capable of unlimited vitality. There were seven states. Each claimed to be sovereign. The pretension on the part of several of them was ridiculous. Overyssel, for example, contributed two and three-quarters per cent. of the general budget. It was a swamp of twelve hundred square miles in extent, with some heath-spots interspered, and it numbered perhaps a hundred thousand inhabitants. The doughty Count of Embden alone could have swallowed up such sovereignty, have annexed all the buckwheat patches and cranberry marshes of Overyssel to his own meagre territories, and nobody the wiser.

Zeeland, as we have seen, was disposed at a critical moment to set up its independent sovereignty. Zeeland, far more important than Overyssel, had a revenue of perhaps five hundred thousand dollars,—rather a slender budget for an independent republic, wedged in as it was by the most powerful empires of the earth, and half drowned by the ocean, from which it had scarcely emerged.

There was therefore no popular representation, and on the other hand no executive head. As sovereignty must be exercised in some way, however, in all living commonwealths, and as a low degree of vitality was certainly not the defect of those bustling provinces, the supreme functions had now fallen into the hands of Holland.

While William the Silent lived, the management of war, foreign affairs, and finance, for the revolted provinces, was in his control. He was aided by two council boards, but the circumstances of history and the character of the man had invested him with an inevitable dictatorship.

After his death, at least after Leicester's time, the powers of the state-council, the head of which, Prince Maurice, was almost always absent at the wars, fell into comparative disuse. The great functions of the confederacy passed into the possession of the States-General. That body now came to sit permanently at the Hague. The number of its members, deputies from the seven provinces—envoys from those seven immortal and soulless sovereigns—was not large. The extraordinary assembly held at Bergen-op-Zoom for confirmation of the truce was estimated by Bentivoglio at eight hundred. Bentivoglio, who was on the spot, being then nuncius at Brussels, ought to have been able to count them, yet it is very certain that the number was grossly exaggerated.

At any rate the usual assembly at the Hague rarely amounted to one hundred members. The presidency was changed once a week, the envoy of each province taking his turn as chairman.

Olden-Barneveld, as member for Holland, was always present in the diet. As Advocate-General of the leading province, and keeper of its great seal, more especially as possessor of the governing intellect of the whole commonwealth, he led the administration of Holland, and as the estates of Holland contributed more than half of the whole budget of the confederacy,[39] it was a natural consequence of the actual supremacy of that province, and of the vast legal and political experience of the Advocate, that Holland should

[39] Gelderland contributed 4½ per cent.
Utrecht „ 5¾ „
Friesland „ 11½ „
Overyssel „ 2¾ „
Groningen „ 6½ „
Zeeland „ 13½ „
Holland „ 55½ „
100

govern the confederacy, and that Barneveld should govern Holland.

The States-General remained virtually supreme, receiving envoys from all the great powers, sending abroad their diplomatic representatives, to whom the title and rank of ambassador was freely accorded, and dealing in a decorous and dignified way with all European affairs. The ability of the republican statesmen was as fully recognised all over the earth, as was the genius of their generals and great naval commanders.

The People did not exist; but this was merely because, in theory, the People had not been invented. It was exactly because there was a People—an energetic and intelligent People—that the republic was possible.

No scheme had yet been devised for laying down in primary assemblies a fundamental national law, for distributing the various functions of governmental power among selected servants, for appointing representatives according to population or property, and for holding all trustees responsible at reasonable intervals to the nation itself.

Thus government was involved, fold within fold, in successive and concentric municipal layers. The States-General were the outer husk, of which the separate town-council was the kernel or bulb. Yet the number of these executive and legislative boards was so large, and the whole population comparatively so slender, as to cause the original inconveniences from so incomplete a system to be rather theoretic than practical. In point of fact, almost as large a variety of individuals served the State as would perhaps have been the case under a more philosophically arranged democracy. The difficulty was rather in obtaining a candidate for the post than in distributing the posts among candidates.

Men were occupied with their own affairs. In proportion to their numbers they were more productive of wealth than any other nation then existing. An excellent reason why the people were so well governed, so productive, and so enterprising, was the simple fact that they were an educated

people. There was hardly a Netherlander—man, woman, or child—that could not read and write. The school was the common property of the people, paid for among the municipal expenses. In the cities, as well as in the rural districts, there were not only common schools but classical schools. In the burgher families it was rare to find boys who had not been taught Latin, or girls unacquainted with French. Capacity to write and speak several modern languages was very common, and there were many individuals in every city, neither professors nor pedants, who had made remarkable progress in science and classical literature.[40] The position, too, of women in the commonwealth proved a high degree of civilization. They are described as virtuous, well-educated, energetic, sovereigns in their households, and accustomed to direct all the business at home. "It would be ridiculous," said Donato, "to see a man occupying himself with domestic house-keeping. The women do it all, and command absolutely." The Hollanders, so rebellious against Church and King, accepted with meekness the despotism of woman.

The great movement of emancipation from political and ecclesiastical tyranny had brought with it a general advancement of the human intellect. The foundation of the Leyden university in memory of the heroism displayed by the burghers during the siege was as noble a monument as had ever been raised by a free people jealous of its fame. And the scientific lustre of the university well sustained the nobility of its origin. The proudest nation on earth might be more proud of a seat of learning, founded thus amidst carnage and tears, whence so much of profound learning and brilliant literature had already been diffused. The classical labours of Joseph Scaliger, Heinsius — father and son — the elder Dousa, almost as famous with his pen in Latin poetry as his sword had made him in the vernacular chronicle; of Dousa the son, whom Grotius called "the crown and flower of all good learning, too soon snatched away by

[40] Antonio Donato, Relazione, MS. Grot. Paralell. Rer. publ. ed. Meerman, iii. 51. Van Kampen, i. 608, 609.

envious death, than whom no man more skilled in poetry, more consummate in acquaintance with ancient science and literature, had ever lived;"[41] of Hugo Grotius himself, who at the age of fifteen had taken his doctor's degree at Leyden, who as a member of Olden-Barneveldt's important legation to France and England very soon afterwards had excited the astonishment of Henry IV. and Elizabeth, who had already distinguished himself by editions of classic poets, and by original poems and dramas in Latin, and was already, although but twenty-six years of age, laying the foundation of that magnificent reputation as a jurist, a philosopher, a historian, and a statesman, which was to be one of the enduring glories of humanity,—all these were the precious possessions of the high school of Leyden.

The still more modern university of Franeker, founded amid the din of perpetual warfare in Friesland, could at least boast the name of Arminius, whose theological writings and whose expansive views were destined to exert such influence over his contemporaries and posterity.

The great history of Hoofd, in which the splendid pictures and the impassioned drama of the great war of independence were to be preserved for his countrymen through all time, was not yet written. It was soon afterwards, however, to form not only a chief source of accurate information as to the great events themselves, but a model of style never since surpassed by any prose writer in either branch of the German tongue.

Had Hoofd written for a wider audience, it would be difficult to name a contemporary author of any nation whose work would have been more profoundly studied or more generally admired.

But the great war had not waited to be chronicled by the classic and impassioned Hoofd. Already there were thorough and exhaustive narrators of what was instinctively felt to be one of the most pregnant episodes of human his-

[41] Van Kampen, i. 608. Grot. Paralell. Rer. pub. iii. 49.

tory. Bor of Utrecht, a miracle of industry, of learning, of unwearied perseverance, was already engaged in the production of those vast folios in which nearly all the great transactions of the forty years' war were conscientiously portrayed, with a comprehensiveness of material and an impartiality of statement, such as might seem almost impossible for a contemporary writer. Immersed in attentive study and profound contemplation, he seemed to lift his tranquil head from time to time over the wild ocean of those troublous times, and to survey with accuracy without being swayed or appalled by the tempest. There was something almost sublime in his steady, unimpassioned gaze.

Emanuel van Meteren, too, a plain Protestant merchant of Antwerp and Amsterdam, wrote an admirable history of the war and of his own times, full of precious details, especially rich in statistics—a branch of science which he almost invented—which still remains as one of the leading authorities, not only for scholars, but for the general reader.

Reyd and Burgundius, the one the Calvinist private secretary of Lewis William, the other a warm Catholic partisan, both made invaluable contemporaneous contributions to the history of the war.

The trophies already secured by the Netherlanders in every department of the fine arts, as well as the splendour which was to enrich the coming epoch, are too familiar to the world to need more than a passing allusion.

But it was especially in physical science that the republic was taking a leading part in the great intellectual march of the nations.

The very necessities of its geographical position had forced it to pre-eminence in hydraulics and hydrostatics. It had learned to transform water into dry land with a perfection attained by no nation before or since. The wonders of its submarine horticulture were the despair of all gardeners in the world.

And as in this gentlest of arts, so also in the dread science of war, the republic had been the instructor of mankind.

The youthful Maurice and his cousin Lewis William had so restored and improved the decayed intelligence of antique strategy, that the greybeards of Europe became docile pupils in their school. The mathematical teacher of Prince Maurice amazed the contemporary world with his combinations and mechanical inventions; the flying chariots of Simon Stevinus seeming products of magical art.

Yet the character of the Dutch intellect was averse to sorcery. The small but mighty nation, which had emancipated itself from the tyranny of Philip and of the Holy Inquisition, was foremost to shake off the fetters of superstition. Out of Holland came the first voice to rebuke one of the hideous delusions of the age. While grave magistrates and sages of other lands were exorcising the devil by murdering his supposed victims, John Wier, a physician of Grave, boldly denounced the demon which had taken possession, not of the wizards, but of the judges.

The age was lunatic and sick, and it was fitting that the race which had done so much for the physical and intellectual emancipation of the world, should have been the first to apply a remedy for this monstrous madness. Englishmen and their descendants were drowning and hanging witches in New England, long after John Wier had rebuked and denounced the belief in witchcraft.

It was a Zeelander, too, who placed the instrument in the hand of Galileo by which that daring genius traced the movements of the universe, and who, by another wondrous invention, enabled future discoverers to study the infinite life which lies all around us, hidden not by its remoteness but its minuteness. Zacharias Jansens of Middelburg, in 1590, invented both the telescope and the microscope

The wonder-man of Alkmaar, Cornelius Drebbel, who performed such astounding feats for the amusement of Rudolph of Germany and James of Britain, is also supposed to have invented the thermometer and the barometer. But this claim has been disputed. The inventions of Jansens are proved.

Willebrod Snellius, mathematical professor of Leyden, introduced the true method of measuring the degrees of longitude and latitude, and Huygens, who had seen his manuscripts, asserted that Snellius had invented, before Descartes, the doctrine of refraction.

But it was especially to that noble band of heroes and martyrs, the great navigators and geographical discoverers of the republic, that science is above all indebted.

Nothing is more sublime in human story than the endurance and audacity with which those pioneers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries confronted the nameless horrors of either pole, in the interests of commerce, and for the direct purpose of enlarging the bounds of the human intellect.

The achievements, the sufferings, and the triumphs of Barendz and Cordes, Heemskerk, Van der Hagen, and many others, have been slightly indicated in these pages. The contributions to botany, mineralogy, geometry, geography, and zoology, of Linschoten, Plancius, Wagenaar, and Houtmann, and so many other explorers of pole and tropic, can hardly be overrated.

The Netherlanders had wrung their original fatherland out of the grasp of the ocean. They had confronted for centuries the wrath of that ancient tyrant, ever ready to seize the prey of which he had been defrauded.

They had waged fiercer and more perpetual battle with a tyranny more cruel than the tempest, with an ancient superstition more hungry than the sea. It was inevitable that a race, thus invigorated by the ocean, cradled to freedom by their conflicts with its power, and hardened almost to invincibility by their struggle against human despotism, should be foremost among the nations in the development of political, religious, and commercial freedom.

The writer now takes an affectionate farewell of those who have followed him with an indulgent sympathy as he has attempted to trace the origin and the eventful course

of the Dutch commonwealth. If by his labours a generous love has been fostered for that blessing, without which everything that this earth can afford is worthless—freedom of thought, of speech, and of life—his highest wish has been fulfilled.

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